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THE

MUSSULMAN.

BY R. R. MADDEN, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF

"TRAVELS IN TURKEY, EGYPT, NUBIA, AND PALESTINE."

——— "the face of Mussulman
Not oft betrays to standers by
The mind within, well skill'd to hide
All but unconquerable pride." *Bride of Abydos.*

"And indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my after rumination wraps me, is a most humourous sadness."
As You Like It.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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TO THE

Memory of that Being

To whose unalterable love in every stage of life I owe a debt of boundless gratitude, I dedicate these Volumes.

Though living love can now derive no pleasure from the inscription, I once fondly hoped it might; and in those distant lands, the manners of whose inhabitants I have attempted to pourtray, the hope was still the solace of many a weary journey, that I might one day return home and tell a beloved parent "of all I felt and all I saw:" I still hoped to compensate maternal anxiety for the pain of many a long year's absence: but alas! it was a vain hope!

R. R. M.

London, Feb. 11, 1830.
22, Curzon Street, May Fair.

THE MUSSULMAN.

CHAPTER I.

The spider weaves his web in the palace of the Cæsars, and the owl keeps his watch in the ruined tower of Afrasiab.

FERDOUSI.

AT the foot of the miserable village of Bournarbashi, where the Scamander has its rise, a few scattered huts were standing some years ago, chiefly inhabited by Greek peasants and the families of Fanariot refugees. The village is on the site of the most celebrated city of antiquity; but a few sepulchral mounds, a river's course, and a poet's lay, are all the

remaining records of Trojan splendour. The European pilgrim is still shown the sacred Zanthus, formed by the confluence of the Simois and the Scamander; and the shadows of Mount Ida are still pointed out on the paltry hamlet, whose Turkish Aga is the only representative in the district of kingly Priam. The gorgeous palaces, the magnificent temples, the gilded halls, the stately columns, have vanished like "the baseless fabric of a vision, and left not a wreck behind."

The only mansion in the modern village deserving to be called a house, is the khan of the governor, adjoining the sources of the sacred stream, a quarter of the town to which the barbarous Cicerones of the place still give the appellation of the Scæan gates. But Troy, in her proudest days, was never ruled by a haughtier despot than Suleiman, the Aga of Bournarbashi. The magnificence of the Trojan princes most probably entailed less misery on the people, than the squalid splendour of the Turkish Aga, now occasioned the unfortunate peasantry. The retinue of the governor consisted of twenty Albanian soldiers and as

many domestics; the subsistence of all was derived from the plunder of the district, which had the calamity of being under the protection of the Aga. The Greek rayahs, of course, were subjected to heavier and more frequent exactions than the true believing peasants. As often as a drunken soldier chose to reel across their threshold, they had to pay an *avania* for the favour; whenever the governor had a present to make at the *beiram*, the capitation tax was to be paid, though "the price of their heads" had perhaps been paid thrice over. When an order arrived from the Capitan Pacha for half a dozen sailors for the fleet, the unfortunate Greeks were sure to furnish the necessary quota; and those who were not torn from their families had to purchase their exemption with the last para they possessed.

It was on one of these occasions, that the myrmidons of the Aga entered the dwelling of a Greek family, who had but recently settled in the district. They were yet strangers in the village, and no one was acquainted with their history; various rumours ascribed to them different fortunes and stations in society,

but the prevailing report was, that Michelaki was a Fanariot by birth, had been a banker by profession, and a fugitive from the capital as a matter of course; that he had been rich and now was poor; had feasted with princes and now had not salt to his pilaw; had money dealings with Pachas, and was fortunate enough to escape an interview with the executioner. Whatever might have been his rank, the beauty of his wife was of that delicate cast which belongs not to the vulgar, and the dignity of her deportment accorded not with the wretchedness which surrounded her. The coarseness of her attire formed a contrast with the elegance of her movements, and concealed not the grace which at that period was deemed the peculiar possession of the Greeks of the *Fanâal*. She was sitting with a smiling infant in her arms, weeping over its little innocent features, when Achmet the Secretary of the Aga, and a number of soldiers, entered the apartment.

"Where is your husband, woman?" said the Secretary: "we wish to speak with him. You have no occasion to be alarmed, we merely want to hear the latest news from Stamboul,

knowing that he has been lately in the capital. Why do you weep? you have nothing to fear. *Min Allah!* God forbid!" All the attendants on the little man in authority doled out *Min Allah!* with due solemnity.

The terrified woman was too well acquainted with Turkish perfidy to hear the words of kindness without trembling; she had hardly power to reply that her husband was from home and would not return before evening.

"There is no hurry," said Achmet; "time is time, whether it be to-night or to-morrow, it is all one, *Allah Karim!* God is merciful! but let your good man call on the Aga when he does return; he is said to be a *Cateb* of eminence, a clever writer, and our master has occasion for his services."

The party retired, but one of the young *Arnaouts* loitered at the door, and beckoning to the woman, whispered in her ear in her own language, "If your husband would not find himself in the fleet to-morrow, let him keep out of the way."

The terror which this intelligence caused may be easily imagined; the wretched woman

ran to apprize her husband of his danger, who was in the house of one of his heedless countrymen in the neighbourhood, solemnizing the festival of one of the innumerable Saints of the Greek calendar. He received the news with the apathy that characterizes the Greeks; he would trust, he said, in the protection of the *Pania*, the sweet Madonna, and he kissed her image as he spoke. "Fly, for Heaven's sake!" said his wife; but Michelaki felt no disposition to sacrifice his present comforts for any future considerations. He crossed himself devoutly with the effigy of his patron Saint, which like all religious Greeks he wore next his heart. "*San Demitri*," he cried, "never abandoned one of his faithful worshippers:" and then he endeavoured to establish his right to divine protection by cursing the enemies of the true religion: in the bitterness of his heart he ran through the whole vocabulary of Eastern maledictions, beginning with an imprecation on the mother of Mahomed, and ending with a curse on the beard of Suleiman. In short, he spent a considerable time in anathematizing the whole Moslem race, after the most approved form and fashion of

invective, but he made no effort to escape the persecution of his enemies. In spite of every remonstrance, he sat carousing with his countrymen, talking of the valour of Leonidas, Scanderbeg, Achilles, and other contemporary heroes, and drowning all future care in soul-spiriting Cyprus.

As the eyes of the merry rayahs borrowed sparkles from the glass, one might have imagined that the Seven Champions of Christendom were assembled in a convivial Areopagus, rehearsing their astonishing achievements. But Michelaki vaunted exploits which bore down all competition; he had overreached Grand Viziers, who were called Locmans, for wisdom; he had led Pachas of three tails by the nose who had the ability to cheat Jews; he had slain fourteen Turks with his own hand in the last revolution in Roumelia; and he had seen the sweating pillar in the Mosque of San Sophia, and had even collected a small vial of the miraculous exudation which had the power of curing every mortal malady.

A merry little tailor asked Michelaki how long he had been afflicted with the chronic rheu-

matism, but it was a profane jest and no one laughed at it.

The only effect of the entreaties of poor Emineh the wife of Michelaki, was to get him to consent to fly the following morning from the impending danger, and to remain at the neighbouring village of Chiblak, till such time as the fleet should have cleared the Hellespont. But that night he felt the Pania was sufficient to protect him from a thousand Moslems, and depending on his patroness, he continued in the society of his frivolous countrymen, singing Hellenic songs in praise of freedom till the soldiers of Suleiman were knocking at the door, and no possibility of escaping was left. The magic influence of a Turkish voice transformed the valorous Greeks in an instant into crouching rayahs, fawning on their oppressors, and vieing with each other in protestations of regard for the best of Agas. Both Michelaki and his companions were hurried off from their festivities to the divan of the Aga.

There each pallid wretch pressed forward to kiss the hem of his revered benish, and then fell back with down-cast eyes and respectfully

folded arms, to await the awful words of authority.

"How many of the giaours are there said Suleiman, deposing his pipe, and without deigning to look on the Infidels.

"There are seven of your slaves," replied a voluble little Greek, "who have hastened to throw themselves at the feet of your excellency, to rub their foreheads in your footsteps, and to know your pleasure, and when known, to lay it on the crown of their heads as the honour of their lives."

"'Tis well spoken, giaour," said the Governor. "I know you all love me, and much reason have you to do so; the Sultan (may his glory never diminish!) permits even rayahs, in the abundance of his mercy, to fight by the side of the true-believing, against the enemies of God and his Prophet, blessed be his Name! His ships want men, and giaours though you are, you are suffered to range under the shadow of the Sacred Sanjak, and to gratify your desire of serving against the unbelievers."

Then addressing his secretary Achmet, with-

out affording any time for entreaty or remonstrance, he said—"Let them be sent to the fleet immediately; they will behave well, they must, for their wives and children shall be hostages for their faith. As usual, let them be provided for in the khan; we will look to their comfort; their husbands, if they are wise, will look to their behaviour. But if any of the poor Infidels," he continued, "have domestic affairs which stand in the way of their honourable employment in the fleet, God forbid they should be compelled to go. Min Allah! not for five hundred piastres would I send away the poorest rayah of them all." The Aga left the room, the Greeks understood the hint, but one only was able to take advantage of it, the voluble little gentleman who lately addressed the Aga; he offered to purchase his exemption, at the price of three hundred piastres, an offer which occupied three hours of discussion, but the bargain eventually was driven. Half an hour was given him to produce the money, and having left his wife for his security, he was suffered to go home.

CHAPTER II.

Thou rascal beadle! hold thy bloody hand.
SHAKSPEARE.

IN Turkey, the bowels of the earth are the banking-houses of the people, consequently panics are less frequent than in the countries of Franguestan, for nothing short of an earthquake can shake the old firm, the original fountain of all capital. At any period, perhaps, it would be difficult to find one half the bullion of the empire above the surface of the soil. Deep beneath, the treasures are deposited which no coffer on the earth would be strong enough to preserve from the rapacity of the rulers of the land. The little Greek no sooner reached his dwelling than he commenced digging up his garden in twenty

different places, in order, had he been watched, to throw his observers on the wrong scent; and finally, with a heavy heart, he visited the real sepulchre of his soul, ravaged the interior of an old saucepan, and disinterred a handful of sequins. Having counted out three hundred piastres he secreted the remainder in the lining of his unmentionables, and proceeded to the Divan. There he paid down the hard cash in the presence of the Aga, who had returned on the important occasion of receiving the money. But no sooner was the stipulated sum paid, than the Aga gave way to ungovernable wrath, "Allah Akbar Mahomet rassur Allah!" he exclaimed, "there is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet: three hundred piastres indeed! giaour, kafir, pessavink, scoundrel of an unbelieving dog, will three hundred piastres pay my poor soldiers for fatiguing themselves to death to find a substitute for you? Whose dog are you, who dares to laugh at my beard?"

"Noble Effendi," exclaimed the Greek, "and very best of governors, I am your dog, I am your servant, the most abject of your slaves; take pity on my poverty, my family are with-

out bread, we are utterly destitute. God sees my misery; indeed I have not another piastre in the wide world."

"Count down two hundred more," cried the Aga, "and fifty beside, for the lies you have uttered; do it instantly, son of an infidel, or undergo the punishment your cursed obstinacy deserves."

The poor wretch protested according to custom, that if a para could save his father's soul from the devil, he had it not; that if it pleased his Lord, the best of governors, to order his servant's body to be flogged into a jelly, the servant of his excellency could not help it, he could not command a single asper to save his flesh; and, as he was a religious Greek, he called every saint in the calendar to witness his utter destitution.

The Aga looked at one of his soldiers; a stranger could have observed no visible gesture, no external sign, no waving of the hand, no motion of the lips; there is no waste of words in Turkey, but in the twinkling of an eye, the Greek was capsized, his legs fastened in a noose attached to a long stick held by

two brawny Arnaouts, and a couple of *ferashes*, stationed at either side, with well-seasoned sticks, which instantly fell on the bare soles of the unfortunate rayah. The stripes were inflicted with terrible velocity, and each resounded as it fell, and, notwithstanding the screams of the sufferer, were even audible to his wretched wife, who was stationed at the door. "Iman Effendi! Iman Effendi!" followed every blow; "take pity on me, Sir! take pity on me!" but the cry was disregarded; the blood streamed from the ancles, but the sight made no pause in the torture. The Aga continued to smoke his water-pipe with the imperturbable indifference becoming his high place; it was only when two hundred and fifty blows had been laid on, that he waved his hand, and the exhausted executioners had leisure to wipe the perspiration from their brows.

"Now, giaour," said the Aga, "are you disposed to pay the remainder of your just and lawful debt?"

"Best of governors!" cried the culprit, raising his head from the ground, "I am a dead man, but money I have none—Heaven

knows the truth—would I have my feet mangled as they are, if I had wherewithal to purchase mercy?"

"Since you are so very poor," replied the Aga, "life is of no value, therefore down with the dog," he continued, addressing the executioners. "Vras, vras! kill, kill! let him have a thousand lashes!" The consternation of the Greek was great; but his love of money was still greater. The number of stripes now ordered to be inflicted generally proves fatal; in fact, nine out of ten of those who receive above eight hundred, die. Again the bastinado was resumed; upwards of a hundred blows more were inflicted; the shrieks of the poor wretch became gradually indistinct; at length they ceased altogether, and he no longer writhed under the blows; there was no effusion of blood, except where the noose which secured the legs lacerated the skin; but the feet presented the appearance of tumid masses of livid flesh, streaked here and there with blue and crimson. "Enough!" said the Governor, "let us hear if he still persists in refusing to pay his debts; raise the infidel, and let him answer." One

of the Albanians accordingly endeavoured to rouse him with a blow over the stomach, which would have been fatal in any other country; but people in Turkey take more killing than even an Hibernian could imagine. The Aga prevented a repetition of the blows; the soldiers grumbled as they laid down their bludgeons. Whoever has witnessed the punishment of the bastinado, must have observed, that the operation is generally commenced with coolness; but as the fatigue of the officers of justice augments, the fury of their passion is let loose on the victim, whose crime they are most probably unacquainted with; and when the last blow is given, it is sure to be the heaviest, and to be accompanied with a malediction on the father and mother of the wretch they have beaten. Now, whether Jack Ketch feels any personal animosity against his clients, we know not; but we certainly never saw a schoolboy flogged, where passion did not add to the gravamen of the pedagogue's last stripe. The Greek either was, or appeared to be, insensible. The Aga concluded he had no more money, he therefore ordered him to be thrown out of

doors, a ceremony which was performed in the most unceremonious way imaginable. He lay motionless as a corpse till the soldiers of the best of governors were out of sight. He then contrived to get upon his legs, and hobbled home much faster than could have been expected, exulting in the greatest triumph a Greek can achieve, the heroical endurance of the bastinado, in order to preserve his purse. Michelaki and his companions were in the meantime chained together, as the recruits of his invincible Highness always are in the Provinces, and marched to the Dardanelles, clanking their fetters as they went along, and manifesting with what willing spirits they gave their arms to the cause of Islam. Michelaki was not suffered even to embrace his wife and child. The wretched Emineh was torn from his sight, and hurried away to the khan of the Aga, where the other women were already immured within the spacious court-yard, bewailing the cruel fate which had separated them from their husbands.

The barbarous custom still prevails along the Asiatic coast of keeping the wives and

children of the Greek sailors as hostages for the good conduct of their husbands, but is often only a pretext for licentiousness, in order to place the women in the power of the governors. This was the case with regard to the beautiful Emineh, a lady who once ranked with the nobles of the land, and now was below the condition of the humblest serf around her. The Greek women had not much cause to complain at the commencement of their detention; they were daily employed in spinning the Aga's wool, and were treated with that rude respect which is generally shown to females in the East. No actual violence was offered to their affections; but in a little while the Arnaouts, who spoke their own language, and partly believed in their own faith, (for the Albanians very commonly profess the doctrines both of Christ and Mahomet,) became less terrific to the fair hostages; they shared their rations with them, and sometimes their caresses, and several of the Greek matrons, it is to be feared, in the course of a little month, became forgetful of Heaven and their husbands. The lovely Emineh was an exception

to these women; the perils which beset her were so many additional motives to mourn the absence of her husband, and there was a sanctity in her sorrow, which even the rude Albanians did not dare to outrage. But at the hands of Suleiman she had many insults to sustain, and many infamous advances to resist. Achmet, the secretary of the Aga, was the secret minister of his pleasures, and, if rumour belied him not, the agent of his private vengeance.

He was a Candiote by birth, and had followed the fortunes of Suleiman in every stage of his advancement, from the station of a favourite slave of a Pacha, to the high post of Governor of a village. Achmet was endowed with very many of the bad qualities, which from time immemorial have been ascribed to the inhabitants of Crete; he was plausible, but perfidious; shrewd, and at the same time dishonest; active, for the ends of avarice, and passionless, though sanguinary. He was one of those mongrel Moslems of the Islands; half Greek, half Turk, an entire knave. His figure was below the middle size, but full of vigour; his features

almost handsome, were it not for the inordinate dimensions of his brows, and the downcast expression of his eyes. A painter of Turkish *sbirri* could not have desired a finer model; but unfortunately, there are no portrait painters in Turkey, for it is unlawful to make the likeness of any living thing on the earth, above it, or beneath. He was still in the prime of life; a thick-set, soft-complexioned, little gentleman, with a small grey eye twinkling in its orbit, a thin aquiline nose, with expanded nostrils, and a pair of small straight lips in exact apposition, in the angles of which a faint smile was continually lurking. Suleiman, on the other hand, was one of those Stambouline Effendis, whose voluptuous inanition and felicitous ignorance, Lady Mary Montague preferred the possession of, to the acquisition of all the knowledge of Sir Isaac Newton. Suleiman was in his fortieth year, a grave, silent personage, therefore a wise man; a slow-paced biped, with a solemn aspect, and imperturbable deportment, therefore a dignified Effendi; and haughty withal, therefore of an exalted station. That he was a rapacious Governor, was no reproach

to his character; the fault lay in the office, not the officer; rapacity is indispensable to every Aga. He had many excellent traits in his character, but as in all sublunary things there is a mixture of good and evil, the Aga had a few of the prevailing vices of his countrymen. His virtues, however, were better known to the world; he was "a tolerable spouse, and a decent sire," a good master, and a strict Mussulman. He did not drink wine like other Moslems in public; he doubted not the propriety of stoning a Sufi for scepticism, of plundering a rayah for infidelity, and of exterminating the whole race of Schiites for their heterodox opinions.

His ablutions were the most perfect of any in the district; the intonation of his Allah Akbar was the most sonorous in the Mosque, and his abstinence in the Ramazan was the theme of the neighbouring Imams; but, he had one little defect which predominated over many others, and that was sensuality. He was not, moreover, remarkably particular about the means of gratifying his prevailing passion; the removal of any impediment gave little un-

easiness to his conscience. Achmet generally suggested the plan, and carried it into execution; Suleiman was too habitually indolent to do either. Indeed, he might have been as good a man as he was a Moslem, had he had a better counsellor than the wily Candiote; but the fatal facility which the villainy of a willing agent threw in the way of every licentious scheme of his, mainly contributed to render him that which Nature perhaps had not intended him to be. It is not more true that we should have no robbers were there no receivers, than, that villainy could not exist in the great world without the subordinate agency of vice.

Soon after the departure of the Greeks from the Dardanelles, where they were to join the fleet, Achmet took an early opportunity of commending the beauty of the wife of Michelaki to his master. Suleiman's placid features were rippled over with pleasure at the name of the beautiful Greek, whom he had already unfortunately seen and admired. As Achmet proceeded in his praises of her loveliness, how the breath of licentiousness came curling over the surface of the dead sea of the Turkish visage!

converting the slumbering aspect of apathy into the inflammable asphaltum of passion, which bubbled up from the bosom of a volcano. "The odours of Yemen," continued Achmet, "are nothing when compared to the fragrance of her breath; the very touch of her hand imparts the perfume of the musk of Hadramut; and when you behold her white teeth, you fancy you are gazing on the pearls of Ommah. The sunbul is beautiful, but no hyacinth is sufficiently lovely to be the emblem of her purity."

"God is most wonderful," cried Suleiman, in a transport of delight; "but one would think, Achmet, you were in love with her yourself, for *Abou Temam* never talked more devoutly of his mistress."

"Blessings on your beard, Effendi," exclaimed Achmet, "I in love with another man's sworn wife! Heaven forbid! What leisure have I to be in love? are not my days and nights devoted to my master's service? were I to fall in love, who would levy contributions on the district and collect the taxes thereof? To me make no more mention of the tune and the

love song; like Ebn el Wardi, I have parted with the instruments of mirth which excite to wanton movements, and regard not even the lascivious Almé."

"You cold-featured scribes," cried Suleiman, "are doubtless very great sages; but you have warmer blood than you acknowledge in your veins, and your livers do not become water so early as you would make us believe. I know your heart is hard as the flint, but the harder the stone the more fire lies concealed. But this Leileh of beauty," continued Suleiman, "is ever in my thoughts. I dreamt, Achmet, she was even in my harem."

"Did you dream," said the secretary, fiddling with his beads, "how she got there?"

"I did," replied Suleiman, fixing his eye on Achmet; "I dreamt that you found the means of bringing her to the door."

"Well, people will dream," cried the Candiote, "but a dream is only a dream; things, to be sure, will fall out now and then which we have fancied in the slumber which succeeds a surfeit." But did you dream, Effendi, of the

return of the husband, at the commencement of the winter, when the fleet put back?"

"Not exactly," replied Suleiman; "but I had some confused ideas of a troublesome rayah crawling in my path, and then following the footsteps of the Mufti and the Vizir."

"But did you not dream," said Achmet, "that you trod upon the reptile that might have ruined you?"

"I confess, I have not a very distinct recollection of the circumstance," rejoined Suleiman; "but I am quite sure I offered you a purse, and, as well as I remember, you did not decline it."

"Min Allah!" exclaimed Achmet, kissing his patron's hand: "Heaven forbid I should decline any command of so excellent a master!"

CHAPTER III.

Sorrow has become thy guest; thou didst not mark its entrance, but thou hast wept over its acquaintance with a broken heart.

EL WARDI.

EMINEH was persecuted day after day with the advances of the Aga: she rejected his importunities, she refused his presents, and she only prayed for the speedy return of her husband, to free her from the dangers which surrounded her. Her only consolation was her little boy. Immured as she was amidst objects terrifying to the heart and hateful to the eye, her affections were wholly centred in her infant; he was the life of her bosom; and in the contemplation of that treasure, she lived, moved, and had her being. The crafty Achmet

well knew how much her affections were wrapped up in her only child, and he resolved on making the knowledge of this circumstance instrumental to the accomplishment of his infamous designs. That she hated Suleiman he well knew; but by giving him some claim on her gratitude, he hoped to overcome her repugnance to his addresses; or at all events, to furnish a plausible pretext for bringing her to the harem, without the inconvenience of unseemly violence. He suggested to the Aga the necessity of adopting some plan which might afford a feasible motive for alluring the victim to the apartments of the women, and at the same time, which might bind her to him by the greatest possible obligation. He proposed stealing the child from the apartment of the mother, when an opportunity should be afforded, and spreading a report that a strolling Dervish, who had of late been in the neighbourhood had been the thief. After a few days, the child was to be discovered by the messengers of the Aga, and brought to the harem, where it was to be restored to the arms of the delighted mother. "If she does not love you

after this," said Achmet, "there is no talisman on earth strong enough to bind her heart to yours."

Suleiman, though a wise man, was perfectly astonished at the sagacity of his secretary. "Mashalla!" he cried, "you are a more clever man than the philosopher who wrote the ten thousand moral maxims, each of which out-values the world. Be it as you say; but the fountain of my heart will be dried up till I see that beautiful infidel in the harem; for, like Locman, I have learned wisdom from the blind, who are assured of nothing before they touch it."

Achmet undertook to kidnap the child, when Emineh should be employed in carrying the garments of the inmates of the harem to the banks of the Scamander; where the Greek matrons to this day, follow the domestic avocation of the daughters of Priam, and still where many a fair form is laved, no less beautiful, perhaps, than those of the blooming goddesses who bathed their immortal limbs in that very stream ere they contended for the prize of beauty.

One morning, on Emineh's return to the khan, on entering her apartment, she was horror-

struck to find her infant missing. She remained for a moment motionless with terror, glancing her regard on every object around, but no where encountering what she sought. She rushed into the apartments of the other women, enquiring of every one for her child: she ran like one distracted into the quarters of the soldiers, demanding of every individual her lost infant, but he was nowhere to be found. No phrenzy is more terrible to behold than the raging agony of a mother deprived of her only child. The death of husband, father, or of friend, has no misery in its calamity comparable to the madness of such grief. The babe which has been snatched from her bosom, is lost to her by no gradual decline of health, by the slow hand of no insidious malady, but is torn from her all at once in rosy health, in smiling beauty: this is a deep sorrow, a heart-rending affliction; and if reason survives its impulse, the instinct of nature is weaker than it is wont to be, or the intellect of the sufferer must be unusually strong. At length the loud violence of despair overpowered the strength of the wretched Emineh, and eventually subsided into

the settled calm of unutterable anguish. The day passed over, and every search was unsuccessful, and at night she would have dragged her tottering limbs to the door of the khan, to go, she knew not where; but the women led her back, her head sunk on her bosom, trailing her feeble steps as she went along, exhausted in mind and body, the most wretched creature on the surface of God's earth. No entreaty could induce her to lie down; all night long she sat at the door of her chamber, shedding no tears, uttering no loud lamentation, but wringing her cold hands, and rocking her throbbing head to and fro, and crying in a feeble voice, whose melancholy tone pierced even the hard hearts of the Albanian savages—"My child! my poor child! my infant! my poor murdered infant!" no other sound escaped her lips, and they ceased not the live-long night. The following day brought no tidings of hope or consolation; the only rumour which prevailed was, that a wild-looking man, in the habit of a dervish, had been seen for some days loitering about the village; no one had observed him since the preceding morning, and the inference was obvious.

The Aga even appeared to sympathize in the affliction of the poor distracted mother; he dispatched some of his soldiers to go in quest of the lost child; he sought to console her with the assurance that God was great, and that what was written in the great book, was written and immutable. What better reasons did she want to be resigned; she asked for none, she talked of nothing but her murdered child; the impression that her infant had been murdered seemed fixed on her imagination, and that terrible idea penetrated daily deeper and deeper into her brain, till it touched the chords of reason, and spoiled the sweet music of the settled mind, perhaps for ever. The intensity of sorrow at length subsided into a calm and listless melancholy, which one better acquainted with human nature than Suleiman might have looked upon as a lasting and irremediable disorder. It was not his desire to have pushed affliction to such an extremity in depriving her of her infant; his object was, after a few days anxiety, to be considered the instrument of her happiness, by restoring the lost child to her bosom, and causing her to believe he had res-

cued the little innocent from the robber, whom the dervish was intended to be accounted.

With such a claim on the gratitude of Emineh, he had little doubt of making her affections the reward of his services. But like all Turkish machinations, the means were not proportioned to the end, and the awkwardness of the execution marred the success of the plot. On the ground of humanity, he had the unfortunate Emineh brought from the enclosure of the khan, where the other Greek women had their apartments, to the interior of the harem, in order, as he said, that his own females might better minister to her wants, and soothe her sorrow. He resolved to delay no longer from his victim the joy of beholding her darling child, and thereby restoring her to health and happiness, the absence of which were already but too visible on her cheek. Had his resolution been carried into effect with ordinary judgment and precaution, it is probable that reason would have resumed her seat; but the truly Turkish mode he adopted, of suddenly presenting the lost child to the eyes of the poor mother, was a shock to the already shattered

mind which terminated in its utter overthrow. The first moment she gazed on its little features, she uttered a shriek, which pierced the very soul; she rushed from the women who held her back, toward the infant, but before her outstretched hands reached the object of her solicitude, she sunk on the floor, the living image of death and sorrow. She continued insensible for a considerable time; but when she awoke to the most miserable of all states of being, the gem, which gave a value to existence, was gone, the foil of ecstasy occupied the casket. Her vacant eye was fixed for a moment on her infant; but she withdrew her regard, as if it had encountered some painful object; she bade the attendant take the annoyance from her sight, and from that hour she never could bear to look upon the child. It was in vain they told her it was the babe she had suckled at her breast; but she only shook her head, and smiled incredulously: she smiled, but some of the women wept; she told them to weep on, for she had no tears, she had shed them all on the grave of her murdered infant. Months passed away, and the

settled gloom of insanity continued undispelled: the spot where she missed her child, her disordered imagination converted into the grave of her little innocent; she covered the surface with green sods, and every morning she was seen wandering along the banks of the river, gathering fresh flowers to scatter over the imaginary tomb. The sacred character which is attached to insanity in Turkey rendered her situation less miserable than it would probably have been elsewhere.

The aberration of intellect was irritated by no ridicule, insulted by no idle curiosity, and aggravated by no unnecessary restraint; the doors of the harem were open to her; she went and came, and no one chid her wanderings. Even the diabolical author of her misery repented of the ruin he had occasioned, and treated his victim with unwonted kindness. The wreck of her beauty, no less than that of her reason, caused him to lament the cruelty of his conduct; the charms, which made the conquest of virtue of any value, were already faded; the rose, which had suffused her cheek, was

gone; and the god-like apprehension, which once lit up her fine eye, was lost in vacancy. Some little portion of the fragrant flower still hung around the broken vase, and enough remained to gratify the sense of the destroyer. One moment he longed for the return of the husband of Emineh, to get rid of the incumbrance; at another period he trembled at the prospect of the retribution he might be called to even by a rayah; he resolved on secretly taking him off on his arrival, or, should that be impracticable, on getting rid of him in a more public manner, through his influence in the capital, on some charge of blasphemy or disaffection. One motive for his murderous resolution was, his fondness for the little boy, whom he had already adopted as his son, as the child of his soul; for so are the children of adoption called, and he doated on him with more affection than he bestowed on his own issue.

In Turkey, the adopted child is as tenderly loved as the natural offspring of the parent, and the affection is generally reciprocal. The

child of the unhappy Emineh grew apace: the first sound he was taught to lisp was the name of father, and the first use of language was made to be, to give that loved title to the deadly enemy of the authors of his being.

CHAPTER IV.

Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
SHAKSPEARE.

SULEIMAN had an only son, named Jussuf, whose mother was the Sultanum of the harem, and a daughter, named Zuleika, by another lady of Circassian origin. Jussuf was about the same age as the little Greek, whose Christian appellation of Demetrius was now changed to Mourad. The two boys were brought up together; fed and flogged together, reared under the same roof, instructed in the elementary knowledge of the doctrines of Islam by the same Imam, were companions in the same sports, and rivals for the same favour. If Suleiman showed any preference for either,

it was for little Mourad, who was indeed a general favourite in the harem, as well as in the quarters of the soldiers. His beautiful little Greek features were full of intelligence and frankness, and the good ladies failed not to observe the laughing devils in his dark blue eyes, and the wicked imps which were eternally planning mischief in the angles of his mouth. One said he was born to eat lions; another that he was destined to break hearts; all agreed that he was born under a lucky planet.

Yussuf was a handsomer boy, at least his features were more regular than Mourad's, but his beauty was in perpetual repose. There was no expression in his countenance, no archery in his eye, no kiosk for revelry in his lip, no forge for thunder-bolts in his brow; if any thing redeemed his countenance from the inanimate expression of the cast of a little Apollo after death, it was a slight elevation of the upper lip, with a corresponding approximation of his eye brows.

The dispositions of the two children were not more dissimilar than their persons; Mou-

rad was the Little Pickle of the harem; he put gun-powder in the Aga's pipe, he stuck pins in the cushions which the young ladies sat on, he mixed ink with the *henna* which was to dye their fingers, he compounded the vermilion which was to paint their lips with the *surméh* which was to tinge their eye-brows; he tore leaves out of the Koran, to the great scandal of the harem, to draw mosques and minarets; he fed dogs who followed him into the Divan, and touched the unclean animals to the horror of all the true believers in the house. Suleiman even found a litter of puppies on his praying carpet, but he forgave the little Kafir as he called him, and suffered him even to make explosions with the gun-powder he begged from the soldiers, though he had once very nearly killed the cook, by blowing up half a dozen of his saucepans. Yet somehow or another he was a general favourite, with all but his own poor distracted mother, and the mother of Yussuf who looked on him with a jealous eye. Yussuf, on the other hand, was a sedate, discreet child; if he played off any

tricks, they were the gambols of a camel, frisky, but exceedingly awkward. He threw pebbles occasionally at the Greek women: he blinded one. He pinched their children when he could get at them in the dark; he emptied oil lamps into the lutes of the ladies in the harem; he broke their pearl-handled mirrors; he told lies, and generally endeavoured to get Mourad thrashed for his mischief, and whenever his mother was the dispenser of punishment he succeeded.

This lady took precedence of all the other women: she had the honour of bringing the first pledge of love to the arms of her lord; the others had no honour at all, save the mother of Zuleika, who had that little portion which is allotted for a female child.

The curse of Lear had been for many years on the harem, and in Oriental countries, where she has most honour who has most children, a barren wife is covered, like the fabled Ashab, with the garment of contempt. The freaks of the two urchins sometimes set the fair ladies by the ears, and Suleiman not unfrequently found his sanctum sanctorum in an uproar.

But as the best regulated harems are subject to occasional squabbles, he held his tongue, and had not the folly to interfere. His name imported wisdom, and he very wisely abstained from attempting to control the elements of wrath, when the fury of his wives was at its height, and discord was howling in the four quarters of the harem. The despot of Bournarbashi often fled from "the multifarious face" of domestic anger, and the fair combatants not having the fear of the sack before their eyes, very often trifled with the domestic felicity of the lord of the creation.

In one of the conflicts, occasioned, as usual, by the pranks of the young gentlemen (it is not only in Europe where children cause the first breach of conjugal felicity), Yussuf's mother was appealed to concerning an affair of honour, in which Master Mourad drew claret from the tip of her son's nose. The worthy matron, like Lord Byron, had very rigid notions on the subject of early education; she thought "the ingenuous youth of nations" could never be flogged too often, or too well. She armed herself with one of her

husband's pipe sticks, a supple cherry, and having very properly taken off both bowl and mouth-piece, she belaboured Mourad most soundly, regardless of his roars, which were loud enough for a young gentleman of twice his years. But a louder and more piercing shriek than any of the little sufferer's was suddenly heard from the unfortunate maniac, who had been sitting in her wonted place in a gloomy corner of the room; and without uttering a word, with a wildness in her aspect which was seldom visible, she rushed out of the apartment. The cause of her excitement no one could divine; she took no interest in the child; on the contrary, she never noticed him: could then his punishment have been the cause, or was it the excitement which the loudness of his screams produced on her shattered nerves?

No one at the time deemed it necessary to ascertain what seemed to be a momentary impulse of insanity. At sunset, the customary hour of assembling at supper, the unfortunate Emineh was missed; she had been observed in her former apartment in the court-yard, dig-

ging up with her hands the mound she had piled over what she deemed the sepulchre of her infant, and as she passed the threshold of the door she was seen scattering a handful of the earth behind her, and shaking the dust off her slippers as she left the gate. The servants traced her steps to the banks of the Simois; they made inquiries in the neighbourhood, but no information was to be had of her; at last they discovered a shawl on the bank close by the river's side, which was known to have belonged to her; it was the only clue they had to the fate of the poor creature, and the only inference was, that she had probably thrown herself into the stream, and had perished. The intelligence was brought to the khan, and it was too good not to be true. It was the will of Allah that she was to be drowned, and she was drowned; and she was dead, and there was an end of her madness. "Allah Karim!" said the Aga, "God is most merciful!"—"Allah Kebir!" responded the women, "God is all-powerful!" No farther search was made, Suleiman was rid of his victim, and the vengeance of her husband was now all he had to trouble him. Some little com-

punction he certainly felt the first few days following the loss of the once beautiful Emineh, and as a salvo to his conscience he resolved to redouble his indulgence to Mourad, and gave a gentle intimation to his wife, that there was a sack in the chamber of the eunuch, and a river in the vicinity of the khan, and that the first person who punished "the child of his soul," without his permission, might have cause to repent it.

CHAPTER V.

Pro.—He bears our wood and serves in offices
That profit us. What ho! slave Caliban,
Thou earth, thou! Speak!
Cal.—There's wood enough within.
SHAKSPEARE.

MANY years had elapsed since Michelaki had been torn from his family, yet no tidings of him were heard in the village. His companions had long since returned to their homes, but he returned not; some would have him dead, others a prisoner in the arsenal. Those who had been his friends thought either event better than the calamity of living with the knowledge of the desolation of his house, the unfortunate end of his distracted wife, and the subverted faith of his poor boy.

Suleiman and his trusty agent were better acquainted with his fate from the time of his

departure to the present hour. Through the interest of the Aga with the Capitan Pacha, the Greek at the return of the fleet to the Dardanelles was not allowed his liberty, but was transferred to a guard ship for the following winter. At the expiration of his time of service, he applied for his liberty, but his petition was disregarded. He resolved, in his desperation, to seize the first opportunity of making his escape; the first day of the Beiram was fixed on for making the attempt, as every one who could afford getting drunk was as religiously intoxicated on that day as any artificer of the Christian community could wish to be of a Christmas morning. In countries notoriously barbarous, as well as in those proverbially moral, festivals of Saints are solemnized with Bacchanalian orgies. Michelaki contrived to get a-shore unobserved, and in a very few days he was at the village of Chiblak, seven or eight miles from Bournabashi. Achmet was soon informed of his arrival, and a few hours after he received the intelligence, he had a commission from his master to execute at Chiblak. That night Michelaki was seized, bound, and sent

to the capital as a deserter from the fleet. The charge was proved, and he was condemned to two years' hard work in the arsenal. The miserable wretches which the dungeons of the Bagnio monthly vomit forth, are here found chained together, or separately fettered with irons proportioned to their crimes, or rather to their circumstances. But it is still a prison of comparative comfort to that horrible gaol, where the infected breath of the crowded inmates becomes a putrid exhalation which trickles down the walls of the damp dungeon, and where the atmosphere reeks with the effluvia of filth and wretchedness.

In the arsenal, on the contrary, the prisoners had the freedom of a large open space extending to the harbour, and were employed as the galley slaves are in Genoa and Venice, and no worse treated. It was Michelaki's fate to be chained to a dervish, an itinerant astrologer, who read the planets which preside over the births of mortals, and described "the skiey influences" to the gaping multitude. But skilled as he was in the heavenly sciences, his supernatural knowledge availed him little in

the arsenal, where he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, and doomed to receive more stripes for his laziness than any individual within the walls who had only followed terrestrial avocations. The crime of the dervish was one of great magnitude, of more than common turpitude, otherwise the disgrace of chaining a true believer to an infidel would not have been his punishment. He was accused of corrupting the morals of a whole harem, by his diabolical charms, and of robbing a venerable Ulema, an aged doctor of Theology and Law, of a considerable sum of money, and of five and twenty commentaries on the Koran of his own composition, which had occupied him five and twenty years, and were well worth five and twenty purses. Dervish Ali was fortunate to escape with his head, and to have been sentenced to no worse punishment than ten year's hard labour. He was about five and thirty; his black bushy hair hanging over his shoulders gave an air of wildness to his person, while his brawny limbs and expanded chest showed the strength of his frame and the vigour of his constitution. The strong lineaments of

passion were written in his countenance; but his studies or his affected inspiration gave a certain abstraction to his look, which redeemed the sensual character of his full black eye, his broad aquiline nose, and sphynx-shaped lips. In short, Dervish Ali had that bold combination of slothful features becoming and almost peculiar to a "magnifique lazaroni." Michelaki and the Dervish being inseparable, it is to be presumed they were on the best of terms. The same policy which compels individuals setting out on a long voyage to be courteous and conciliatory to their fellow-passengers, from whose society they have no escape, made a virtue of the same necessity in the case of Michelaki and his companion. A chain of three feet long, and a good-humoured man at either extremity, attachment becomes a bounden duty, a sort of Siamese compact is involuntarily entered into; and Ali and his friend the Greek became united in the closest bonds of friendship. But beside the physical inducement to agree well together, there was also a moral motive; Michelaki loved rum, and so did the Dervish, and "that was sympathy."

There was but one source of contention which occasionally mingled bitterness with the cup of fellowship. The Mahometan monk was cursed with that constitutional laziness which characterizes his fraternity in every part of the globe. He had so long lived on the bounty of Providence, or rather on the credulity of fools, that to work for his bread with the sweat of his brow, appeared to him an intolerable hardship.

The Chiaous, who was the deputy of the task-master, never fixed his eyes upon the poor Dervish but he found him idle; carrying, perhaps, one log of wood upon his brawny shoulders when Michelaki was bearing five, or gazing on the stars and cursing the Ulema, when his industrious companion was piling balls and bomb-shells. The result was, that his attention was very frequently drawn off the heavenly bodies by the stripe of a courbash; but, unfortunately, Michelaki often came in for a portion of the punishment which was meant for his associate.

"How, in the name of San Dimitri, is it," said Michelaki to him one day, "that so

vigorous a man as you are can prefer to be beaten ten times a day, to the performance of a task which a weak man like myself accomplishes without difficulty?"

"Michelaki," replied the Dervish, "your mind is not enlightened, therefore you speak like a fool. Can he who devotes his life to God bestow his strength on worldly occupations? Can he who converses with the stars carry logs of wood on his shoulders? Can he who controls the influence of the unpropitious planets, break his back in piling cannon balls?—No, no: I can stick daggers in my flesh for the glory of Allah,—behold my arms: I can sear my skin with red hot irons to edify a congregation,—regard my breast: I can slash my legs with a naked sword at a procession, to gain an approving smile from a well known lattice,—examine my limbs: but to work like a dog, to sweat under a burden, to degrade one's nerves and sinews by manual labour—*Min Allah!* Heaven forbid!—better to be beaten, better almost to die, than to work."

The Greek, much as he regretted the incurable laziness of his friend, could not help

laughing at the conversation with the stars, and the controlling of the planets.

"I thought," said he, "you promised to laugh no more at my mustachios; to talk to me no more of that celestial knowledge, which availed you so little when the Ulema sent you to the bagnio."

"True, my friend," replied the Dervish, "I did promise to say no more on these subjects; but I hope one day to get out of this infernal place of labour, and if I did not keep the language of the heavenly sciences in a little practice, what would become of me hereafter? But henceforth I will treat you—albeit, you are an infidel—as one of our own brotherhood, and keep the mysteries of Giafar for the ears of true believing hearers. But I have consulted the stars——"

"For the love of San Dimitri," cried Michelaki, "no more about the stars; remember your promise."

"Well, then," continued the Dervish, "I know nothing of futurity, if I remain ten months, much less ten years, within these walls; if I had only my celestial instruments,

my astrological implements, for casting nativities, and exhibiting the miracles of magic to the million, I should be out of this workhouse in a month. I would show the headless trunk of a Chiaous in a supernatural glass to that villainous deputy, and would give him a charm to wear round his neck, which would secure it from all harm. I would manufacture an amulet for the old captain of the arsenal, containing a compound of the musk of the crocodile, and the powdered muscle of a lion, enveloped in a leaf of the Commentary on the Koran I borrowed from the Ulema—an amulet whose virtues should exceed those of any philtre in the world, and transfuse the spirits of youth, and the warm streams of life, into the frozen veins of age and infirmity. But, alas! the Cadi has the whole of my celestial apparatus."

"Depend upon it," said Michelaki, "if I get out before you, I will purchase you a whole box of juggles at a German magazine in Galata; and as to the lion's flesh, and the crocodile's musk, I have a cousin an apothecary in Pera, who keeps all sorts of drugs, brick-dust, and civet, and you shall want nothing for the

amulet. In the mean time, you might fulfil a promise you made me long ago, of giving me some account of your life, with as little as possible of the stars and planets. The Chiaous is at dinner, and I have half an oke of rakee in the dungeon, commence, for the love of San Dimitri, or for the sake of any saint you believe in."

"Are you sure you have the rakee," said the Dervish; "then," continued he, giving a glance at the heavens, "since the sun is in the méridian, it is a propitious hour to tell a story, and while I speak, remember the words of Imam Ali—blessed be his memory!—'Listen, if you would learn; be silent, that you may be wise?'"

CHAPTER VI.

Believe in the law, and trust not the man who watches the progress of the stars.

EL WARDI.

"IN the beginning of the world," said Dervish Ali, "when God created all things, he blessed our father Adam with a son, whose name was Seth, and he, in course of time, rejoiced in a child, who was called Enoch."

"Oh for the Pania!" exclaimed Michelaki, "do not commence with the beginning of the world."

"And this Enoch," continued the Dervish, disregarding the interruption of the Greek, "was the first astrologer; his work, the Edris Kitableri, which contained the knowledge of all the occult sciences, became, in the revo-

lution of centuries, the inheritance of our father Abram, the celebrated magician of Chaldea; from him the Zabians, or Nabatheans, derived the knowledge of the heavenly bodies; and from one of the descendants of these, a poor Zabian physician, who practised in Stamboul, I received the first rudiments of celestial science — (Michelaki groaned). — You must know, I am the son of a Caffigibashi, who was renowned for selling the best coffee, and keeping the finest chibouques, of any man in the capital. The shop was adjoining the Medresse of the mosque of Sofia; so that the most celebrated doctors of theology frequented our benches, and publicly disputed on such points as are open to disputation. To avoid the scandal which might arise from the appearance of such sanctified persons in a public khan, my father encouraged no other customers but lawyers and divines; in short, his shop became the rendezvous of the religious. The conversations I was accustomed to listen to made a deep impression on my youthful mind; I became inflamed with a holy zeal to spread the law of Islam over the world; I resolved to

become either a soldier or a priest. I at length determined on the latter: my father had sufficient interest to procure me admission into the Medresse, beside which we lived, and in this college I continued three years, studying the Koran, and endeavouring to comprehend the inexplicable and innumerable commentaries which have been written on 'the perspicuous book.' An unfortunate accident, however, interfered with my ambition; I was turned by the shoulders out of the College, and all my hopes of becoming an Imam, a Ulema, and, in course of time, even a Mufti, vanished like the smoke of my chibouque. The unforeseen event which blasted my future prospect of preferment, was an amour with the wife of an Imam in the neighbourhood. I verily believe that I was born under the influence of the planet Beltha, which the infidels called Venus; indeed, the Zabian physician, whose disciple it is my glory to have been, assured me, that the period of my birth corresponded with the ninth month, which is called Cœnum, and is sacred amongst the Zabians to the worship of the planet Beltha. It was my misfortune to at-

tract the notice of the Imam's wife one morning on her return from the bath; I thought she elevated a corner of her veil as I passed by, she therefore wished to make my acquaintance. I followed her at a respectful distance till she entered a Jew's shop, which, of course, you are aware, is the ordinary place of assignation. While the dog of a Yudi was tumbling about his merchandize, I stepped beside the lady, and ejaculated in her ear, 'O Guzel Sultanum! Oh, beautiful Sultana!'

"'Whose lover are you?' said she, affecting displeasure at my words, 'who mistake me for your mistress?'

"'Oh, my soul!' I exclaimed, 'the lightning of your black eyes has set my heart on fire, and dried up my blood. Speak to me, by my head I conjure you, if you would not see me drop dead at your disdainful feet.'

"'What can I say?' replied my invisible beauty; 'my husband watches me all day, and if he were to see me speaking to you, he might drown me, and he would certainly shoot you.'

"'I laugh at his old beard, my charming bulbul,' said I. 'Tell me, by your soul, where

I shall meet you: my sighs are become like burning sulphur; I only live to behold your beauty !'

"'Do you know,' said she in a whisper, 'the quarter near Pera, that suburb of the accursed infidels called San Stephano ? — There are many Greeks living there, and they have little kiosks in their gardens;—I have been in one there, before I was the wife of the Imam. The house is called Cesthandi's: to-morrow, at the Asser, I will be there with my black slave, she is nobody.'—'May your kindness never be less, my lovely Leileh !' I exclaimed: 'your countenance, though veiled, is the light of my eyes; and your comely person, though enveloped in your ferigee, is more beautifully shaped than the full round moon.' To avoid the suspicious eye of the Jew, I instantly withdrew, delighted with the prospect of the morrow's interview, and heedless of the peril I encountered in keeping my appointment. All that night was I figuring to myself the charms of the Imam's wife,—'What a beautiful face,' said I, 'must be concealed by that fortunate veil which has the privilege of touching her

sweet lips! What a combination of perfections, in shape and size, must that happy ferigee enviously hide, jealous of the delight of surrounding her portly figure! True, I have had a glimpse of but one of her stag eyes, for she modestly hid the other while she addressed me; but oh, what an eye! the conflagration of forty streets was nothing to its fire.' But then I gazed upon her feet, and although her lovely ankle was lost in the yellow boot, which might have contained the extremity of an elephant, I still pictured its beauty to my imagination. In short, I behaved with all the extravagance of a young Mejnoun who had not been in love for an entire fortnight. I counted over the tedious hours till the arrival of the propitious moment appointed for our meeting. I reached the house; the star of my hopes was shining over my head; I beheld the treasure, whose beauty in a few minutes was to ravish my eyes, standing at the lattice above the door.

"Finding myself unobserved in the street, I rushed into the house, and in an instant was standing in the presence of the adorable planet, whose countenance was to be the light of my

soul. She was sitting in the corner of the sofa when I entered, veiled as when I first beheld her, but divested of all her former timidity and constraint. I offered not to sit down, before she motioned to me several times to be seated; and having thus shown my profound respect, I waved all farther ceremony, and seated myself by her side. 'Ah! Sultanum,' I exclaimed, 'my liver has become water since I gazed upon you; I have pined away since yesterday till I have lost my shadow; the lightning of that one eye has scathed my soul. Oh, look on me with the other; remove that veil which conceals your charms, and let the full sight of a mortal houri heal the wound which a partial glance has given.'—'Patience, my little nightingale,' replied my enchantress; 'the rose does not all at once disclose its treasures to the bulbul; they might be too much to encounter suddenly. If the glance of my one eye pierced your young heart, the full blaze of both is more likely to dazzle than to do you any good.'—'Heavens!' I exclaimed, 'what consideration for an astonished lover! May your tenderness never diminish! may your

beauty never be less!' And then, no longer able to suppress the emotions of my tenderness, I burst into tears, clasped the divinity to my bosom, and tore away the envious veil.—Give me a little rakee," continued the Dervish, "or I never shall be able to finish the recital."—Having fortified his nerves with a copious draught, he thus proceeded. "Though you are an infidel, Michelaki, you must have heard, that after the day of judgment, both the good and the bad must pass the bridge which is laid over the midst of hell, and which is called Al Sirah; that it is finer than a hair, and sharper than a sword; and that the good shall pass over it in safety, but the bad shall be hurled into hell. The miserable wretch, who thinks he is entering into the joys of paradise, and suddenly finds himself flung into perdition, is horror-struck, no doubt;—and not less so was I, Michelaki, when I gazed on the lineaments of a living Goul, the brightness of whose eyes was derived from shining streaks of kohol, but all the other features were left to their natural deformity. Instead of pressing to my bosom a beautiful young Shirene, blooming like the white blossom

of the almond-tree, graceful as a javelin, languishing as a gazel; I gazed on an old woman of five-and-forty winters, withered as a medlar, wrinkled as a dry date, and shapeless as a pumpkin! I sat before her absolutely petrified with horror. 'I told you,' said she, 'to beware of rashness; no man ever looked at me all at once without being confounded with the brightness of my countenance; but I compassionate your surprise. Guel baccalum! Come man, take courage,' and with these words, laying her hateful hand on mine, she pressed me to approach her. I drew back my hand with involuntary horror,—'How dreadfully ill I feel!' I exclaimed. 'Holy prophet, grant that we are not poisoned with this wine; I feel my very entrails torn with dreadful pains—help, help—My beautiful Sultana! must I abandon her at the propitious moment? Oh, cruel fate! why has it been written so in the eternal book? that I must part with the crown of my heart, the jewel of my soul! Oh, dreadful pains!—farewell, my angel; by your eyes, let me meet you to-morrow, any-where you will—at the Jew's shop, if you please; shall it be at noon?—horrible tor-

ments, why do you separate me from my love?" Writhing as I rose, I rushed out of the room, leaving my astonished Guzel Sultanum to her own reflections on my flight. I returned with even greater haste than I came; it was only when I reached my apartment, that the vision of the detestable wife of the Imam ceased to haunt me."

CHAPTER VII.

He's in his fit now, and does not talk after the wisest. He shall taste of my bottle: if he have never drunk wine before, it will go near to remove his fit.

The Tempest.

"If you have a soul for pity," continued the Dervish, "and feel for the distress of mind I suffered at discovering the deformity of the mistress whose beauty I had set my heart upon, you will help me to a little rum, to enable me to proceed."

The spirits of the monk were accordingly refreshed with the elixir of life, and he continued his history.

"You do not imagine, I presume, that I kept my appointment with the Imam's wife the following day? Heaven forbid! I avoided the Jew's shop as if the plague had been raging

in the quarter where it stood; but my unlucky star prevailed over the benign influence of my natal planet. Three days had not elapsed, ere I stumbled on the path of my soul's torment—the Imam's wife. I attempted to fly, but she placed herself before me: this time, she gave me the benefit of the glances of both her eyes, and never shall I forget their fury. 'Dog of a deceiver!' she cried, in a voice almost loud enough to be heard by the passengers, 'as true as there is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet, I will be revenged of you!' and raising the corner of her veil, she spat in my face. I had no inclination to encounter the fury of a disappointed woman in the public street: the words of Imam Ali flashed across my mind; 'When a woman is moved to anger, she is like a raging lion.' I did not offer to resent the indignity I suffered. I made a short turn round the corner of the street, and hurried home. It never occurred to me to look behind till I had reached the door of the Medresse; I then did so, but it was too late: my curse was at my heels, I was dogged to my dwelling, and I trembled for the result. The next morning, I was summoned

to the presence of the Ulema, under whose patronage I had entered the college, and there, to my horror, I found the wife of the Imam, and the good man himself. I approached the Ulema, and attempted to kiss his hand, but he spurned me like a dog, and said in a voice of thunder, 'What have you to say to the complaint of this offended woman?' I trembled from head to foot. 'The humblest of your disciples, venerable pillar of the faith,' I replied, 'never set eyes on this woman in his life before this moment.'—'Has your tongue no shame, young man?' cried the Ulema, 'to utter a falsehood in the face of heaven! Have you no recollection of the blessed words of the theologian Methnevi? "The infidel who has not the law, causes one of the attributes of the Divinity to become manifest when he tells the truth; but he who lies is far removed from the law, although he calls himself a Mussulman."' While the Ulema was uttering the maxim, the Imam and his wife looked on me as if they were impatient to tear me to pieces; the wife, especially, was infuriated in her gestures, and it was with difficulty the servants of the Ulema could pre-

vail on her to avoid interrupting their master. But no sooner had he finished his last word than she gave vent to her pent-up rage. 'Oh, yes, Effendi! this is the villain who insulted me in the street with his wicked proposals; by my eyes, this is he! I would know his impudent face in any part of the world: he followed me from the bath; he told me not to care for my husband—wicked wretch that he was, to bid me wrong the best of husbands! I turned my head away, like a true and loving wife, but he still pursued me. 'Your eyes,' said he, 'are brighter than the sun, and your face is more beautiful than the moon;' but I scorned to listen to him. And then, reverend Ulema, he said he belonged to the Medresse; or how should I have known where to find him? and he swore by your revered beard, that it was no crime to dishonour the Imam, because his superiors did as bad. You know you said so. And the only word I spoke to you was, 'Whose son of the Shitan are you, to bring ashes on my head, and shame on my worthy husband's beard? Whose dog are you to speak evil of the pillars

of the law, to throw your filth on the burning lamps of Islam, who have other things to do besides running after other men's wives?' These were the only words I said, Effendi. By the soul of your father! by the blessed camel of the Prophet! by the honour of your mother! give me justice!'

"'Enough, woman,' said the Ulema, with some impatience; 'go home and thank Heaven you have a good husband, who, in turn, has reason, I hope, to bless the Prophet (to whose name be honour) that he has so true and virtuous a wife.' There was a tone of irony in the words of the Ulema which gave me a momentary gleam of hope, but it was soon dispelled. 'Culprit,' said the Ulema, 'if you had your deserts, five hundred stripes would be too little for your bare feet. No less a punishment a wretch deserves who dares to insult a woman in the streets; but in consideration of your poor father, and for some other reasons, for this time you shall escape the bastinado; but as you have proved yourself unworthy of the sacred avocation to which

you aspired, you must not be suffered to disgrace it. Quit these walls without delay, and never show your face within them.'

" I knew that all remonstrance was vain; the servants thrust me out of doors. I walked about the streets afraid to go home; my father was the most violent man in the world, and the most particular about women, so I gave up all thoughts of facing his anger.

" After duly cursing the Imam and his wife, the Ulema, and my evil stars, I found myself much relieved, and had leisure to think where I should look for a night's lodging. I proceeded to the house of a Nabathean doctor, who, although his creed was cursed in the Koran, was nevertheless suffered to medicate true Moslems without medicine. He had cured my father of a quinsy by a single consultation with the planets, and the administration of an astharlab, or astrolabe, boiled in vinegar, given at the propitious hour, when due regard was paid to the favourable conjunction of the planets.

" Matotheo!" exclaimed the Greek, " cannot you pass over the heavenly parts of your story?"

"Had you lived in 'the time of ignorance,' my friend," replied the Dervish, "before the light of Islam illuminated the earth, you could not have betrayed a more besotted mind than you now do.—My father, (he continued) showed his gratitude to the Zabian, by a handsome present, and moreover, never charged him for his coffee when he frequented the shop, which was generally once in the four-and-twenty hours. As he had often professed a great friendship for me, I resolved to put his professions to the proof: I repaired to his abode, which was situated in the filthiest part of the Jewish quarter, than which I thought there could not be a more unfavourable spot for celestial contemplation. I saluted the old man with the utmost cordiality as I entered his apartment, but of course I did not give the salaam of peace to an unbeliever. He appeared rejoiced to see me, and when I told him my sad story, he pointed to a closet adjoining the divan, he placed his pipe on a Persian carpet which was before us, and then opening a cupboard in which I observed a loaf, a little salt, and a few handsful of rice, he

said, 'I have nothing more to offer you, but such as these are, you are welcome to them.' This is poor fare, thought I, for one intended for the Church, but it is freely given, and kindness over a frugal meal is better than a feast without it. The room was so gloomy, that I could barely discern the features of my host, which I had not seen for a long time, and the furniture of the apartment, which I had never visited before. The old Doctor was a native of Chaldea, was attired in the costume of his country, and had at least seen sixty revolutions of his favourite planet. His figure must have once been commanding:—he was tall and well-proportioned, but the stoop of age, and the long white beard of sorrowful experience, (for it never can be joyful,) gave him a venerable mien, which was not a little serviceable to his professional avocations. A great number of manuscripts in some unknown characters, were scattered here and there. The signs of the Zodiac were rudely painted on the ceiling;—the walls were hung with astronomical scrolls, and in an alcove at the end of the chamber, a shrine was placed, covered over

with a veil, on which was painted mystical figures representing the powers and properties of the seven planets. This was called the shrine of the first cause, and in it were the four lesser shrines of Mind, Providence, Spirit, and Necessity, the whole enclosed in a case of a spherical form, representing Eternity.

"Beneath these were silver plates of various figures; one of six angles to denote Saturn, a triangle to represent Jupiter, an oblong-square to personify Mars, and a perfect square the emblem of the Sun. The three favourite planets, the Sun, Moon, and Mars, had little effigies surmounting the shrine in the metals most consonant to their nature, the Sun's of gold, the Moon's of silver, and Mars' of iron, explaining, as I was afterward informed, the tradition of the names given to metals by the chymists.

"'Abou Rassed,' said I, 'I know you are, as your name imports, an astronomer; explain to me, therefore, the meaning of those devices; enlighten my mind, I beseech you, on the subject of the stars, which seem to be the objects of your worship.' The old doctor very good-

naturedly consented to gratify my curiosity; he had a high opinion of my metaphysical knowledge, so he made no scruple of letting in the light of celestial science on my understanding.

"'My son,' said the star-gazer, 'mock not what you do not comprehend: laugh not at an old man's beard, because it is white; time has made it so, and time is the father of knowledge. If your Prophet have mingled 'Jews, Zabians, Christians, and Magians,' in a single anathema, why should I be angry with you for his injustice? If I profess doctrines which are not yours, why should you curse my father's faith? But you are many in the world, I am one; but therefore do not ridicule my creed. Massoud tells us, 'He who has truth on his side is the church, although he be alone.'

"'What pageantry, you will say, is this I gaze on? Emblems of the starry host, mystical ensigns of astrology, transcripts of the Sacred Edris scattered around, what Pagan superstitions are connected with these lifeless things. I will tell you, my son; the worship of those bright orbs which glitter overhead—which give light and heat to earth—which shed their influence

on the soil—which govern the motion of the sea, and which communicate their electric impulse to the spirits of man; these are what you deem the superstitions connected with the objects you behold. You smile at my words; your own poet, Ebn el Wardi, was laughed at for his philosophy, and with him I might say, 'Ah, thou who seekest error in my words, remember the sweetness of the rose is a poison to the Scarabeus.' If you ridicule the worship of the heavenly bodies, am I to renounce their brightness, and bow down before the sacred Sanjak of the Empire, and adore the remnant of a camel-driver's trowsers? Are these more glorious objects to enshrine, than the emblems of those living fires which roll in the eternal space, and enlighten and irradiate the universe? What object is fitter for human contemplation than the glorious planet of the sun? Who is not joyful when he shines? who is not dejected when he sets? Have not all nations called him the supreme light?—he once was the Ourotaalt of your people, the Orosmades of the Persians, and the Mithras of the Magi; but how few are left who understand the sacred

symbols of the Mithraic sacrifice. These glorious and incorruptible planets, which preside over this paltry sphere, we believe to be the mansions of genii, spirits of an ethereal nature, by whose ministry the Lord of Lords governs the world and disposes of human destinies, and by their influences is the supreme will revealed to mortals. We therefore worship the Sun as the greatest of the heavenly powers, the Moon as the brightest of the celestial goddesses, and the Stars as the inferior deities. Whether we are to rise from the earth, or to be mingled with the soil and go to the formation of new compounds, is in the hands of Him who made us. Whether we are to receive rewards or punishments for the natural and necessary effects of the heavenly influences, we leave to the high will, which our wishes cannot alter, our repinings cannot change. We believe this world to be eternal, because it is not, like our bodies, subject to decay: kingdoms flourish and they fall, empires arise and nations are swept away, but the mountains of Chaldea do not disappear, diminish, or decline.'

"'Mashallah, Abou Rassed,' I exclaimed,

'Allah is my witness, you are a wonderful man! By the great Sun himself, instruct me, I beseech you, in a little Elm-al-Kef, or if you will not teach me chiromancy, initiate me into the mysteries of Elm-al-Nagioum, the science of astrology. But there is one question I would fain ask you, Abou Rassed. Is it true that, besides the three kinds of sacrifice you offer, namely, bread, a hen, and a sheep, there is a fourth, that of a young infant, beaten to death on the day of the festival of Al Bukal, or the feast of the weeping women, in the month Thammuz? You are aware, father, that many mangled bodies of children are found every year in the secret places of the capital, and that the Jews—(curses on their beards!)—have been charged with the murders at the sacrifice of their Passover. Tell me, by the planets, is it the Jews, or the Mendai of your people, who make these sacrifices?'

"'There are three steps of initiation which lead to the mysteries of science,' replied the star-gazer: 'they are gained by patience, prayer, and abstinence, with none of which prerequisites you have as yet complied; but Insh

allah! if it please God! you shall know all things. I have heard of the sacrifice you speak of; I have read of it too; but the law, you know, my son, would punish such bad deeds. God forbid I should be guilty of any such!'

"'Min Allah! Abou Rassed,' I replied, 'Heaven forbid you should!'"

Michelaki, who was the picture of horror, no less shocked by the abominable doctrine promulgated by the pagan than by the inhuman rite ascribed to his worship, here interrupted the Dervish. "To-morrow, if it please Heaven," continued the Greek, "you will finish your history; to-day, we have a thousand logs of wood to pile before sunset."—The Dervish groaned in spirit, vented a few of his customary execrations on his gaolers, and dragged his unwilling limbs to the place of work.

CHAPTER VIII.

By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes,
Open locks, whoever knocks.

Macbeth.

THE following day the Dervish continued his story in these words:—"I soon found out I was in the house of a star-gazer, who watched not the planets—of a physician, who practised without physic—of a fortune-teller, who was most unfortunate in his affairs—of a Zabian, who believed the world to be eternal, and was yet content to live from hand to mouth.

"All the learning of the astrologer was derived from books. The emblems of the heavenly bodies were alone consulted, and horoscopes were made from these with as much accuracy as if they had been taken from the

stars themselves. Every morning he had two or three women at his door to consult him about lost property, to buy a charm to become fruitful, or to purchase an amulet, to lay a spell on an indifferent husband, or a cold lover. On these occasions, I always retired to my closet, fearful of the consequences of being known to be an inmate in the house of a pagan star-gazer. But I had a still stronger inducement. I could distinctly hear all that passed between the astrologer and his customers, and through a chink in the window-shutter could even see their faces. One morning, an old lady of fifty came to beg a philtre, to regain her lord's affections, which had fallen on another wife, a giggling inexperienced creature of seventeen. 'O hakkim!' said she, 'every body venerates your beard, may your science never fail! I have heard of your wonderful doings: how the pipe-borer's wife was blessed with twins, after consulting you; how the whole harem of my husband's brother became fat and beautiful, after procuring one of your charms. I have five piastres to offer you, give me something, I pray you, by your soul! to make my

husband love me;—there is no Moslem here; —look at my face: tell me, by your eyes! are these features to be despised? are these two suns deprived of fire? is there no beauty in my two black eyebrows? is there no loveliness in my nose, no sweetness in my lips? O tell me, hakkim, why have I fallen into disfavour? is it as I suspect? has my rival, that baby-faced girl, cast a spell on my once loving spouse? Tell me, O hakkim! and give me a charm to regain his affections, which I only am worthy to possess.'

"Her veil was still uplifted, while she waited for the reply of Abou Rassed. Next to the Imam's wife, she was the ugliest woman alive; the long use of cosmetics had seared her shrivelled features, and the nose, whose loveliness she dwelt on, I could compare to nothing earthly but the beak of the monstrous bird Simorg. Abou Rassed raised his pipe to the ceiling, and following the circle of the Zodiac, he went through every sign till he reached that of the capricorn, and passing the pipe-stick over either horn, he pronounced her husband's name three times in an awful voice. Then ad-

dressing the once-loved wife—'Oh, Narcissus!' he exclaimed, 'what art thou in comparison with this languishing eye! this lid of beauty only slumbers, but thou art sick and faint. Is the musk of Hadramut impaired by keeping? does it not dispense its fragrance all around, and diminishes not a grain? Is the pearl of Oman less beautiful when strung, than it was twenty years ago, when hidden in a shell? Can time coutrol the lustre of the stars? can years swallow up the beauty of the moon? No, beautiful Lady! what gives the mellow amber of perfection to the wine of Cyprus; what gives a blossom every century to the aloe; what gives vigour to the oak, maturity to the olive, and beauty to the almond, likewise gives, O fair Sultana! experience to pleasure, softness to beauty, and gratitude to love! Dry up your tears, you have no cause for sorrow; this amulet bind over your forehead, wash off the vermilion from your cheeks, and the antimony from your eyes, and use nothing to your face for three days and nights but the balm of Mecca. Not that it is necessary in itself, the amulet being all-sufficient,

but the tree which produces it being sacred to Beltha, the Goddess of Love, her favour may be propitiated. Keep out of your husband's sight for forty days, endeavour to keep your rival exclusively in his favour for half that period, and this handkerchief of yours, which I shall impress with the stars of your astharlab, never remove from the lower part of your face in the presence of your Lord. Go, woman, and be happy.'

"The lady of fifty summers, with the mellow amber of perfection on her cheek, kissed the hand of the astrologer with great fervour, and having deposited her five piastres, took her leave. 'May your beauty never diminish!' said I, as she went out,—'one truth is no less constant than that of death and reproduction: The vanity of a woman never dies!'

"The next applicant was a young person accompanied by a black female slave. By the quality of her murlin, or outer veil, and the fine texture of her ferigee, I judged her to be a person of high rank. The moment she entered the room, the modesty of her downcast eyes, and the irresolution of her timid step, set

my heart on fire. But the recollection of the Imam's wife abated the ardour of my expectation. 'Heaven only knows,' thought I, 'what features are concealed under that impenetrable veil.'—'Sit down, my child,' said Abou Rassed, 'let your slave abide outside, Allah and ourselves are only present; fear nothing!' On this assurance, she seated herself in the divan, exactly opposite my chamber; she threw up her veil at the bidding of the old man, and disclosed the features of a houri. Heavens! how I gazed on the splendour of her face! I resolved from that moment to abandon the worship of the stars; all the brightness I ever dreamed of was before my eyes. 'Father,' said the lovely girl, in a tremulous voice, but melodious as Israfil's, 'I have come to you in sorrow, for you are said to give hope and comfort to the wretched. If you have any charm to help me to my lost peace; if you know of any magic to cure the sickness of the fond heart, I will pay you for it, father, whatever be its price. Tell me quickly if you know of any such, for there is no time to be lost.'—'Softly, my child,' said Abou Rassed;

'the heavenly bodies are not to be consulted rashly. A horoscope is not the work of a minute: the rising and the setting of the stars, their aspects and conjunctions, and their mansions among the constellations, are not to be observed with an irreverent haste.'—'Then,' replied the earnest girl, 'it is better I begone; an hour, nay, a moment is of the utmost value.' The astrologer was not at all inclined to let such an applicant slip through his fingers. 'There is another mode,' said he, 'fair daughter, by which I can resolve all your doubts and difficulties, which is attended with no delay, that is by the divining cup. What do you desire to know?'—'Will the cup,' cried the girl, 'tell the business which brought me to you?'—'In shallah!' exclaimed the Astrologer, 'if it please God, the cup shall tell you more than that.' With these words, he proceeded to the shrine, put his hands to his mouth with great reverence, opened the cedar door, and brought forth a brazen goblet inlaid with silver and covered over with verses from the sacred Edris, or book of Enoch, curiously engraved. 'This precious vessel,'

said he, is the giam, or divining cup of King Suleiman; the bottom of which is the mirror of the world, which will discover all the mysteries of life.' Having poured a dark coloured fluid resembling ink into the giam, he gazed on it intently for a few minutes, and then setting it on the ground, exclaimed in a loud voice—'Thanks, wonderful giam! and praise to the name of Sultan Suleiman, the father of the Magi, the Lord of the Mendai. Listen, young woman, and tremble at the oracle. The business which brought you here is love, and the evil you would prevent is marriage with the man whom you love not.'

"The astonishment and the terror which these words conveyed were so great, that I expected to see the poor girl drop down at the feet of the astrologer. 'Oh, wonderful diviner,' said she, 'your words are inspiration; they are the words of truth, I will pay them with gold. But tell me further, how am I to act; my father has promised me in marriage to an old Ulema, I have seen him through the lattice; he has two wives already; he does not permit them to go even to the bath; and they have

no honour, for they have no children; I hate him more than the ugliest of the infidels; a buffalo is not more unseemly, a camel is better shaped—all the women swear he is the son of the Shitan.'

"'Or rather,' said the astrologer, 'the Golam Tohal, the child of Saturn, the coldest of the celestial bodies.'

"'Oh, Abou Rassed!' continued the poor girl, 'if you had seen the Sunbul, the beautiful hyacinth of my heart, which I must needs tear hence, to sicken over the faint odour of a faded Gul, you would pity my sad fate. But you have never been in love, or you would feel what it is to have a nightingale living opposite to your lattice, sighing all day long for the rose, his mistress, and singing the praises of her beauty. Can you not write a charm to kill the Ulema? do, father, I beg of you; let him die to-night if you possibly can. I know a magician like you can do any thing.'

"'Heaven forbid, my daughter,' said the astrologer, 'that I should kill the Ulema, merely because he loves you and you do not happen to love him. Perhaps I can serve you equally

well without doing murder. I can make him hate you, I can prevent your marriage.'

"Oh, had it been the pleasure of the Apostle to have transformed me into the astrologer, what a transport of joy had then been mine: the delighted girl rushed into his arms, kissed him on the forehead, stroked his white beard, and called him her preserver. The old man took the cup, pronounced some unintelligible words, and then placing the giam in her right hand, he bade her repeat after him the following rhapsody, which, as well as I could remember, was taken from Hafiz—'Give me, O celestial cup-bearer! to drink of the wine of heavenly love, the purest of which is found at the table of the blessed on the borders of Rocnabad, and in the gardens of the sacred Oratory.'

"'Enough!' cried Abou Rassed; 'the charm is done, go home to your father's house, and laugh at the Ulema's beard; but merely for the sake of employing your attention, I will give you a few hints as to your conduct, not that they are at all essential, the charm of Sultan Suleiman being all-sufficient, but you may as well observe them.

"'The man you hate is a Divine—the man you love is a Janissary; both are, praise be to God! people of importance. Now, if you were to send your slave to the Ulema, and give him the promise of a meeting in the Greek quarter—not exactly the most respectable of the suburbs—the assignation would delight the soul of the Divine, who is no doubt dying to behold you. Your hyacinth, the Janissary, in the mean time, should procure a lady of your size and appearance, to personify you, and to meet the good old man. The worst character he can find, will best do. She must be well paid, and, if possible, be notorious to the neighbourhood. Your hyacinth will likewise apprize the Ulema's two wives, by means of a female emissary, of the Ulema's infamous assignation in the most opprobrious quarter of the town, and they must be invited to have the ocular demonstration of their lord's guilt. Your hyacinth will likewise take care to have as many as possible of his friends concealed close by; and the moment the Ulema is seen with your representative, let them be surprised, first by the two wives, and then by

your lover and his friends; and the more noise that is made, the greater will be the mob.

"If the Ulema be not confounded, it must be your friend's fault; if his wives do not tear his eyes out, I have no knowledge of womankind. If his reputation be not blasted, there is no virtue in the world. If your father give you to him, it is well he did not wed you long before to a Kafir or a Christian. It is easy for the Janissary to let the woman escape during the confusion; it is his duty as a neighbour to inform your father of the wickedness of the man he meant to make his son-in-law. In shallah! if it please God! your father will make a friend of your lover, and it may be, force that friend to become your husband.'

"'Praise to Allah,' exclaimed the overjoyed girl, 'who gave wisdom to your lips! your words have been meat and drink to my soul. My liver, which had become water, is comforted and restored by your sweet counsel; may your kindness never be less to your poor servant!' And with these words she deposited some money on the divan, and retired.

"'The joy of paradise go with you, my

little houri!' said I; 'the hyacinth of your heart is the most fortunate of flowers: what astrologer, save Abou Rassed, could refuse to kill a Ulema to oblige you! That I love you, my little man-slayer, is a truth, than which no other can be greater, except this. No lattice was ever close enough to keep out love.'

"No sooner had my little planet Beltha ceased to irradiate the room, than Abou Rassed examined his fee; the liberality of her promises was fresh in his recollection; but to his great disappointment, he found three of the smallest gold coins of the realm, carefully wrapped up in half a dozen envelopes. I could not help compassionating the poor astrologer. I formed the resolution, if ever I became a fortune-teller or a physician, to be feed before I spoke; for no two professions can extort more money from men's fears, and no two avocations commonly extract less from men's gratitude.

"Abou Rassed having gone out to visit his patients, I was left alone in the apartment; for the harem of the astrologer was on the upper story. I was disturbed from my reflections on the illiberality of the little man-slayer by a

loud knocking at the door. I demanded, who was there? 'It is a poor afflicted widow,' answered a woman, in a shrill discordant tone, 'who has a present to offer the hakkim bashi, and a few words of comfort to beg from his wisdom.'

"'Allah Akbar!' I exclaimed, 'there is only one God, Mahomet, Rasur Allah, and Mahomet is his prophet, and, by his beard! that voice should belong to the Imam's wife. I would know its terrible sound in the remotest region of the earth.—Stop a little, good woman,' cried I, in a feigned tone, imitating that of Abou Rassed as closely as I could; 'in a moment I will let you in.' I threw one of the astrologer's outer garments over my attire, and the veil of the shrine over my head, which was of thick silk gauze, richly brocaded with gold and silver stars. I admitted the old fiend, and I heard a few exclamations of surprise and fear as she gazed on my awful veil. Having led her to the divan, I took my seat on the opposite side, and, with my long pipe stick, I imitated the solemn ceremony of my master, following the circle of the Zodiac, till I reached the sign of the balance. 'Behold!' said I, in a

hollow sepulchral voice, 'the sign of justice, the planet of retribution, the star of your nativity!'

"'Is it so, illustrious hakkim?' replied the afflicted widow — 'God's will be done!—he took away my poor dear husband. Allah Karim! God is most merciful! But, oh, hakkim, why do you cover your face? is your servant unworthy to look on it?'

"'This, woman,' I replied, 'is the month of Thammuz, sacred to Lamaael, the Prince of Darkness, therefore am I veiled. Speak what you would know, and tell me, if you can, that which I know not.'

"'Oh, hakkim!' cried the disconsolate widow, 'do not say so; wiser though you are than Locman—oh, do not say you know all things; surely you know not who I am, or what brought me to you?'

"'Audacious woman!' I exclaimed, 'do you blaspheme the Goddess Beltha? do you come here to laugh at my giam? Behold this sacred cup, the divine vessel of Sultan Suleiman, surnamed the Magician! behold those mystical characters, written, like the

blessed Koran, by the unerring finger of Allah, before the foundation of the world! behold your name, and read herein all the secrets of your bosom! Art thou not the wife of the deceased Imam of the Suleimanieh?' (A shriek of astonishment pierced my ears.)—'Wert thou not his true and faithful wife?'—'I was, blessed hakkim,' was the reply. 'And art thou not the most afflicted widow on the surface of the globe?'—'I am, Effendi,' was the answer; but the astonishment of the tone was much diminished.

"'Then, true and faithful wife, and most afflicted widow,' said I in a slow and solemn voice, 'I find the name of some strange place written in the bottom of the giam which I do not comprehend, the name is San Stephano; on this point 'tis you who must enlighten my understanding."

"'Allah, Allah!' cried the widow in a voice almost inarticulate with terror; 'by my mother's soul—by my father's beard—by the Apostle's camel—by the four rivers of Paradise—by my two eyes, I know not what you speak of,—how

should I know? why should I know any thing about it?'

"'Woman,' said I, 'laugh not at the beard of an astrologer; though you swore through the catalogue from the most insignificant of oaths to the climax of perjury, you know the name well; you have been in the place, but the poor Imam was not with you. Do not wring your hands, but listen to my words; you toyed with your gallant, but you told not the poor Imam of your pastime;—do not tear your hair, the drizzled plumes of the old ostrich are never reproduced.'

"'Oh, magnificent hakkim, illustrious astrologer!' exclaimed the widow, 'heap no more ashes on my poor head, throw no more burning sulphur on my heart. Do not believe the giam—I mean no offence to it, heaven forbid!—but as true as the Imam is in his grave, if I went to that place you mentioned, I came home as I went, the true and faithful wife of my poor dear husband—heaven be his bed! He was a villain, a vile, deceitful villain who persuaded me to meet him there; I know it was by a spell he

overcame the strict propriety of my behaviour, for I never consented to meet any other being of the male kind.'

" 'Beware, woman, of the vengeance of the giam,' I exclaimed, 'I see the blush of anger mantling over the surface.'

" 'Wallah, Effendi,' cried the widow, 'I never consented; if I ever did meet any body it was always by compulsion.'

" 'Be it so,' said I; 'but let me again consult the cup. Oh, wonderful giam! what good-looking young gallant is this I behold in thy sacred mirror? what handsome youth is this I gaze on within the walls of a Medressé? what goul is this who gloats on the beauty of his countenance, now smiling at his approach, now frowning at his departure? Oh, wonderful giam! what old daughter of sin and shame is this, foaming with fury, heaping lies and injuries on the head of the object of her appalling love, and laughing like a hyæna at the innocent lamb which has become her prey? Oh, wonderful giam! what is this? Speak woman, answer me, by your eyes!' If this attestation fail, thought I, the widow of the Imam must be dead. I peeped

through my veil, she was lying senseless in a fit. The fear of Abou Rassed's return moderated my delight, but I still enjoyed the triumph of my vengeance; and when I threw a jug of cold water in her abominable face, it was less out of humanity, than for the purpose of arousing her to the torments of her own thoughts. 'Beautiful Sultana!' I exclaimed, as she opened her eyes, 'how is this? why has your soul been troubled? what unhappy word has wrung your heart and dried up your blood? What have you to do with the vision I described? you are not the goul!—Min Allah! you are not the daughter of sin and shame, God forbid!—I was going to tell you the fate of this Simorg, this ill-omened bird of monstrous size, which sits on the mountain of El Caf, and mocks the moon with hideous love-notes. It lay dead before me in the giam; I saw the corpse visited by the two examiners of the grave, the two black livid angels of terrible aspect, named Monker and Nakir; I saw the ugly corpse set upright in the grave, and heard it examined touching the sins of incontinence and falsehood; I saw it beat on the temples with iron maces

by the two livid angels till it roared with agony; I saw the ashes of the rank grave crammed into its mouth, and then beheld it set on by ninety-nine dragons, with seven heads each, to gnaw its festering heart till the day of judgment! Nay, think not to budge from this apartment till you hear the entire truth. I then beheld the corpse on the bridge of Al Sirat, which is laid over Hell, and which leads to eternity. I saw the shivering body walking on the path conducting to Paradise, on the path which is finer than a hair; I marked the terror of its steps;—it trembled, woman, as you do now: it looked bewildered and dizzy, the view of hell beneath was enough to make it so; it tottered a few steps onward, and then tumbled into the fiery gulph. I beheld the hissing serpents embracing the poor corpse; I saw the furious dragons lashing it with their tails; a million of wanton monkeys mowed and chattered their amatory music in its ears, while it was chained at last to a red-hot rock, and a funnel larger than the universe was placed over its bosom, distilling burning sulphur drop by drop. But the

lightest of the pains which the wretched body endured, was being shod with shoes of fire, the fervour of which caused the skull to boil like a cauldron.'

" ' Enough ! enough !' cried the terrified widow—' one drop of cold water if you would save me from death—appease my burning thirst, throw me in the sea, drown me with cold water; open the windows, I care not who sees me, only give me the fresh air—there, there, that will do; thank heaven for that cold breath; take that terrible giam out of my sight,—a little more cold water—thanks, thanks; praise be to God who formed the heaven, and raised it without pillars.'

" I was satisfied, I was revenged. I now set about composing my victim sufficiently to enable her to inform me of the business which brought her to the Astrologer. I assured her she had nothing to do with the terrible apparition I had just described: I sought to dispel some of her fears; and what with flattery, and what with cold water, I brought her to herself. ' Now, my fair daughter,' said I, ' call

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back your soul, and tell me what service would you have of me; I will remove the giam. Speak, my little fawn, tell me by your black eyes what you desire."

"'Ah, tender-hearted hakkim bashi,' replied the afflicted widow in one of her softest tones, 'your compassion is the recompense of all my sufferings; may your condescension never diminish! may your house prosper! I am a poor disconsolate widow, and grief is my only occupation; if my murlin be discoloured, it is with heaping ashes on my head; if my eyes have lost their lustre, it is with weeping. You see how I have rent my garments, not only the seams, but the very skirt and body of my feridgee. Oh, why was I born to lose so good a husband! Ah, why do I live to lament his loss! If affliction could kill, I would ere now be a dead woman. But, alas! the best of husbands departed this wicked life so suddenly, that he had not even time to make his will. Every body said, 'the Imam is made of gold, his widow will be richer than any woman in Kum Kapi.' But I did not think of riches:

I cried with the mourners two whole hours without intermission. I saw the body washed and dressed; I shut the eyes with my own hands, I tied the toes, and then only I looked after the riches of my poor dear husband; but oh, hakkim! judge of my horror, when I found only half a dozen purses in paras, and no gold at all. I redoubled my grief for the best of husbands; I reiterated my lamentations over the remains of the Imam, which were now my only consolation; I searched every hole and corner for the treasure which I knew must be concealed somewhere or other in the house, but I did not find it. Therefore have I come to you in my distress to give me some consolation for the loss of the best of husbands, and to tell me where can I find the bulk of the Imam's property, which I have reason to believe is buried either within or without the walls of the harem. Oh, hakkim, I am a disconsolate widow, speak a word of comfort to my soul.'

"'Dry up your tears, widow,' I replied, 'the soul of your husband is buried within the walls

of your dwelling. Your house is an old one, and new floors would be an improvement. Dig them all up from top to bottom, and suffer not the long grass to grow up in the court-yard of your dwelling; stir up the soil. But, before you commence operations, dismiss your servants; if you find not the Imam's wealth, I am no astrologer; if you do not give me a moderate portion of it, beware of the giam; the world may know more of your history than you care to disclose. No words, woman; remember the giam! in three days fail not to return here.' I pushed the disconsolate widow out of doors, divested my person of my astrological attire, and congratulated myself on my first essay in the celestial sciences. 'May your stars be propitious, most true and faithful of wives, and most disconsolate of widows'! said I: 'Relict of an Imam, may some Ulema have the blessing of your second love, for that second love is less durable than the first, is false; but nothing is more true, than that the sight of a well-stored hasnah, a rich treasury, is the first consolation to a regularly-afflicted widow.'

" When you set out on a long journey, my friend Michelaki, you have not only ' to stir the foot of activity, but to mount the patient horse of toil and travel.'—But you are yawning and rubbing your eyes, as if you were fatigued to death: to-morrow, if your soul awake, I will tell you the remainder of my story."

CHAPTER IX.

Mislike me not for my complexion;
The shadowed livery of the burning sun,
To whom I am a neighbour, and near bred.
The Merchant of Venice.

"My first astrological feat" (continued the Dervish on the following evening) "let in a flood of light on the darkness of my understanding. I trod this paltry earth with the foot of pride, but my head was in the stars: I thought of nothing but of horoscopes; I talked of nothing but of astrolabes; I dreamt of nothing but the Goddess Beltha, the most beautiful of the planets, and more glorious in my eyes than the supreme divinity of the Zabian. I resolved to become a star-gazer; and, in order to do so with impunity, to enter a convent of Dervishes

whenever I could command a few hundred piastres. My soul was still ambitious of sacerdotal honours; the repose of a convent was a pleasing contemplation. I had no doubt it was written in the great book above that I was to be a priest; if not an Imam, at least a Dervish. I had no doubt but that the disconsolate widow would purchase my silence if she found the Imam's gold, and I awaited the three days' expiration with no little impatience. In the mean time, my unlucky star again had its ascendancy in the heavens; the worship of my favourite planet once more involved me in trouble and perplexity. My worthy master, Abou Rassed, my instructor in heavenly knowledge, had no less than seven mouths to feed in his harem, so that he seldom had a surplus paras in his purse; yet he looked to his giam and the stars for his raz kallah, or 'daily subsistence from Providence,' with as much confidence as if the Haznadar of the heavens was his first cousin. One evening, I was gazing on the Goddess Beltha from the window of my closet, which looked into the court-yard, thinking of all the love that was necessary to make

so much light, when an earthly cough took my attention off the heavens. By the light of the pale moon I could discover the figure of a female on the opposite terrace. I could distinctly see the fair one's hands clasped over her heart; then raised to her lips, and then pressed on her eyelids. Never did I behold so exquisite a shape, or so dignified a deportment. 'Ye heavenly bodies,' I exclaimed, 'shine propitiously on my head! It is the Queen of Love, the Goddess Beltha herself, who has descended from her sphere to bless the sight of the most devoted of her votaries. She calls me to her! Behold her lily palm extended towards me, beckoning me to approach! A moss-rose in a milk-pail is not more beautiful than that blush of modesty on her marble cheek. The whiteness of her skin is more resplendent than the silver beams of the moon. Oh that the night was less obscure, or my mistress a little nearer!' I come, my divinity, whispered I, as I pointed to the door of the harem, which led to the terrace, and then taking off my shoes, I flung an entire bottle of rose-water over my person, and crept up the stairs without even daring to draw

my breath. I heard the astrologer snoring as I passed his room. The door of the harem had been left ajar; in the twinkling of a planet I was on the terrace—I beheld my divinity, the beautiful lily of my soul, standing at a little distance. I rushed into her arms—(ye heavenly bodies, enable me to proceed!) — the daughter of darkness pressed me to her bosom, I found myself locked in the embraces of a black! My head recoiled with horror from the swarthy slave; yet I endeavoured to conceal my repugnance. 'It is evident,' thought I, 'the Goddess Beltha is laughing at my beard. By all the planets, from this dreadful hour, I abjure her worship!'

"'What is he matter with my turtle-dove?' said my Ethiopian charmer: 'Have I found no favour in the eyes of my sweet bulbul? Alack! how unfortunate I am not to please my lord.'

"'May the modesty of your speech,' cried I, 'my raven of gentility, meet the reward it merits.'

"'Ah, Effendi!' replied the girl, 'do not laugh at my amsak, because I am not a white woman; I know it was very foolish to fall in love with you, but I could not help it; since

ever I had a glimpse of you at that little window, I have longed for the sight of you, and now that my eyes are blessed with your presence, my soul has melted into water, for I fear you cannot love me.'

"While she spoke, I had leisure to examine her more closely.' 'Would to Heaven!' thought I, 'it were possible to make her face white; I would willingly purchase a cantar of the finest soap of Candia to wash her even into an olive-coloured beauty.' She was not above seventeen, her shape was perfect, and her features pleasing. The mildness of her manner, above all, tended to reconcile me to her complexion; I resolved to combat a prejudice beneath the consideration of one devoted to the heavenly sciences. I accordingly endeavoured to assure her, that in affairs of the heart, I made no distinction of colour. 'What flower, my sweet girl,' said I, 'is more lovely, than the violet? and yet a couple of deeper shades would render it beautifully black. No wood is handsomer than ebony, no gem more esteemed than jet. The skin of this soft cheek is more exquisitely polished than either: what white woman has so smooth a

hand? so small a foot? It is no wonder I mistook you for the Goddess Beltha, and that astonishment made me dumb when I first beheld you.'

"'Oh, Effendi!' exclaimed my dark divinity, 'your words are like sugar, their sweetness is more precious than the purest honey; you are the light of my eyes: but Heaven forbid Abou Rassed knew I loved you! he would flog me to death, as sure as my name is Mahaboobi.'

"'A fig for Abou Rassed!' I replied; 'whose dog of a pagan is he, to lift his hand to one I please to love? Is he my lord? dare he call himself a Mussulman? can he boast of being a true believer? Am I not a Moslem? might I not have been a Ulema, had it not been for a small accident? Fear nothing! my little jet black beauty, I am your master, and your lover, Mahaboobi; a fig, I say, for that old star-gazer, Abou Rassed!'

"'We were stationed under a low stack of chimneys which screened us from the windows of the harem; I cast up my eyes with a scornful glance, as I finished the last word; O Mahomet! prince of prophets! what terrible apparition did my sight encounter! what

appalling vision made a heap of ashes of my heart! It was no goul I looked on, no gin, no genii, no spectre of the grave, no spirit of the Shitan:—it was the bald head of Abou Rassed, it was the awful beard of the Astrologer! there he stood on the other side of the chimneys, leaning on his elbows on the top of the stack, and peering his long neck over the side, listening to our discourse. I thought I should have sunk lifeless on the roof; as for Mahaboobi, she screamed like a wild cat, and fled into the harem. I made no effort to escape; I thought it was as well to face the anger of my host, then, as in the morning; the terrible scene was to be gone through; no doubt it was written so to be, I therefore stood my ground. When the old man came round, he placed himself right before me—he fixed his indignant eye upon me—he looked my proud heart down to the very dust; he spoke not for some minutes, but there he stood, staring me out of countenance; no expression of fury in his features; contempt was all I could read in his regard; and there it was riveted mildly and immoveably on my shrunken face; it was the

most terrible reproof a human being ever suffered. But when I saw him thrust his fingers into that white beard of his, whose scattered hairs were waving in the wind, and when I heard these words accompany the action—

"'Young man, was it to laugh at this you became my guest?' I could endure the torture of this soul-cutting meekness no longer, I burst into tears. 'Master of my slave,' he continued, in the same low and solemn voice; 'lover of my servant; when you came into the house of the old star-gazer, the pagan, the unbeliever, who dared not to call himself a Mussulman, you had no place wherein to lay you down to sleep; you had no bread to eat, no sherbet to drink, no chibouque to pass away an hour when you were sad, no coffee to refresh you when you were weary. I was a Zabian, as you knew, yet you asked me for hospitality, and I did not refuse you; I was a Pagan to your law, yet I took you under my roof; I was poor in worldly riches, yet I shared with you my best fare, humble as it was. For this you spat upon my creed, you mocked my hoary age, you laughed at my white beard, abused my kindness, and,

not content with seeking to dishonour an inmate of my harem, you endeavoured to rob me of my slave's respect, and took the pains of teaching her to despise me. For this I call no malediction on your head: I pray not the heavens to punish your violation of the most sacred of all human laws, those of hospitality.

"'Your punishment I leave to your own thoughts, for in the hell your Prophet has described, there are no torments so painful as the reproaches of a guilty conscience. Go, young man, let your shadow never again darken my threshold.'

"Abou Rassed pointed to the door as he ended his harangue. I began to feel that it was a manifest weakness to have wept as I had done, I repented of my tears. 'Am I not a Moslem?' thought I, 'and what right has a pagan to take such liberties with a true believer?'

"'Abou Rassed,' I exclaimed in a loud voice, and frowning thunderbolts at the star-gazer as I spoke, 'you have used me like a dog; you have abused me with such foul words as no Mussulman ever endured in the world. I will not put up with the indignity; besides,

it is your own doctrines which have perverted my understanding, and made me act as I have done. You told me this world was eternal; till I heard so, I always fed my imagination on the hopes of enjoying the society of the black-eyed houries of paradise. You told me there was no paradise above, it was therefore necessary to make one on earth. I commenced laying the first stone of the edifice this night on the roof of your house, and you tore up the foundation of my happiness.

" 'You told me the Goddess Beltha presided over my birth; I therefore deemed it a bounden duty to worship the queen of love how and when I could, but you interfered with my devotion.

" 'You told me there were no future punishments, because all mortals lived under the influence of the stars, and had no free-will. I believed you, like a fool as I was; I felt an irresistible inclination to make love to your black slave, and I seized the earliest opportunity of so doing, believing most piously the impulse was from the stars and not to be controlled; yet you stepped in and prevented the accomplishment of the heavenly suggestions, and now inflict

on me, according to your own words, a punishment more terrible than the torments of hell. Oh, this is unheard-of injustice, this is tyranny not to be endured! This comes of consulting the stars, a crime forbidden by the Koran. Have you forgotten the warning God gave Giafar—'You govern yourself by the stars, but you forget that Allah is their Creator, and that his will is immutable.' Can you deny that Abou Yussuf hath commanded us to study all sciences save three—namely, astrology, alchymy, and metaphysics; because the first anticipates experience, which is always sad; the second consumes our substance; and the third engenders doubts? Therefore, look to your beard, Abou Rassed, before you heap injuries on my head. Therefore, bethink you, there are Cadis in the land, before you thrust me out of doors at a moment's notice: all the silver of your shrine will not satisfy the stomach of the Cadi, even if you prove your innocence; but if I convict you of blaspheming the name of the Apostle, (to which be glory!) and which you cannot deny you have repeatedly done in my presence, your head, Abou

Rassed, will be too little to pay the forfeit of your impiety. I should not have reminded you of these things, but that you have used me worse than a dog; thrown all sorts of filthy names in my teeth; heaped false accusations on my head; blasphemed the Prophet, and threatened to throw me out of doors at this time of night. But out of this house, it is written in the stars, I shall not budge for two days; or, if I do, the giam will not save you from the clutches of the cadi. Let me, therefore, remain in peace two little days; let me part with you as a friend, to whose kindness I have owed both bed and board, whose bread I have eaten, whose cup I have drunk of, and whose hospitality, if I have abused, I am sorry for it. You have given me much, and I have little to offer you; but still, like the Persian, I can present to you four things which are not in Heaven — my indigence, my unworthiness, my sins, and my regret.'

"'Go, my son,' said Abou Rassed; 'let the two days be ten, if you desire it; your last words do more honour to your heart than your first ones?'

"I took the good man's hand and pressed it to my lips; I was ashamed of my words; and a tear or two, which for the life of me I could not drive back to my heart, fell on the fingers of the old Zabian before I had time to release them. The two following days I avoided his sight, I ate and drank in my little closet; in fact, I could not face the good man I had so shamefully insulted. The evening of the second day I sent an emissary of mine to the Imam's widow, to tell her I expected her the following morning, at noon precisely (the hour at which I knew Abou Rassed should be from home). To give her also to understand that she had found what had been missing, and to remember the giam, I directed my messenger to wait for no reply, and to enter into no conversation with the widow. The blessed morrow at length arrived, I heard the muezzin calling the true believers to midday prayer; it was noon, I heard a tremulous knock at the door, I had just time to throw the sacred veil over my shoulders and to admit the Imam's widow.

"'Peace be on you, fair daughter!' said I; 'have my words been those of truth, or have they not?'

"'Not altogether, most pre-eminent amongst your contemporaries in wisdom,' replied the widow; 'I have only found a very small portion.'

"'Then must I consult the giam,' I exclaimed, 'I 'll soon know the truth.'

"'For the sake of the Apostle,' cried the widow, 'talk not of the giam! Here are fifty piastres, and swear by the blessed camel you will never open your lips on the subject of our consultation.'

"'Widow,' said I, 'by the camel and his rider, (both be glorified!) unless I get on the spot four purses, the Cadi shall be acquainted with the whole history of your life before two hours.' The widow remonstrated, I threatened; she became refractory, I produced the giam; I wrung doubloon by doubloon from the terrors of her soul, till I at length extorted three purses, I then thrust her out of doors, and prepared for my departure. At Abou Rassed's return I thanked him from the bottom

quench our thirst, how small a draught allays our drought. Envy not the Mufti his exalted rank, repine not at the prosperity of the Ulema. You are probably happier than either; you have less care, you have, perhaps, better health: and he who has health should have hope, he only is unhappy who has neither. No, my son, it is not the exalted we should envy; why should we envy those, whose crimes, perhaps, are to give immortality to their names? —'Where are Canaan and Nimrod? Where are they who gave and took away the kingdom of the earth? Where are they who were lords of the land, and builders of its palaces? They have all perished, and nothing but the ruins of their monuments remain!'

"'These are the heroes, my son Ali, whose high station you would have envied, had you lived in their time.'

"'Ah! but, Abou Rassed,' said I, 'you have omitted the succeeding sentence of that beautiful poem you have just quoted;—'Where are the masters of eloquence? the possessors of heavenly intelligence? the patrons of learning of the former generations? God will raise

all of them from the dead, and reward each according to his deeds!'

"'Well,' said Abou Rassed, 'if it will be so it hath already been ordained; if it be not ordained, it will not come to pass; and if it do not, I cannot help it; neither have you any reason to think it would be pleasing to the heavens to have my throat cut for differing with you in opinion on a subject of much doubt and no certainty.'

"'Ah! my father,' I replied, 'there is nothing in the world physically certain but death; but there is an invisible spirit in our breasts, which lifts our contemplation to the brightness of the heavenly bodies, and suggests the idea of a Creator; which directs our regards to the beauty of the earth, and points out the blessings of a merciful God. And that same spirit speaks the most certain of all moral truths to our hearts. It tells us the Being who poised the planets in the firmament without pillars, to illumine and irradiate this lower world; who spread the earth as a garden in the infinite space, and laid it as a habitation for his servants; who made man the lord of all, and the birds of the

air, and the creatures of the deep, and the brutes of the field, his slaves; who gave dominion to our puny race over the monstrous Simorg who flaps his immeasurable wings over the mountains of El Caf; over the great fish Nun, the lobes of whose livers are to suffice seventy-two thousand true believers at the day of judgment; and over the mighty ox Balaam, whose bulk causes the earth to groan; —gave not the advantage to the most perfect of his creatures, for the miserable privilege of living a few years with the knowledge that we were only taken from the soil to be mingled with it again for ever.'

"'I have not heard the flapping of the wings of the Simorg,' replied Abou Rassed; 'I have not seen the lobes of the Nun's liver; neither have I tasted the flesh of the ox Balaam. But if such animals exist, and that we prey on them, as every living creature does on a weaker or less cunning victim, I see no reason why we should arrogate to ourselves the exclusive consideration of the Creator. The perch is a rapacious little fish, but he is devoured by the kelp el bahr, and this dog-fish

in return is swallowed up by the crocodile. But this, you will say, is done by mere brute force; by one creature stronger or larger than another; whereas man is infinitely inferior in size and strength to the creatures he subjects to his will by the mere power of his reason. But this great crocodile of the Bahr Nil, who has swallowed up the dog-fish, who has swallowed up the perch, is in his turn kept in terror by a little bird who gobbles up the hopes of a crocodile's family at a meal, I mean the crane, who devours the eggs of the destroyer. But the crane would be a very foolish little bird to say, I have dominion over the monsters of the deep, therefore the universe was created for me alone.'

"'Abou Rassed,' said I, 'for a man so pre-eminent in wisdom as you are, you talk great folly. I will not dispute with you about words; be it reason, or be it instinct, or let both be one; of that one quality, whether does an elephant or a man possess the larger portion? You do not deny man the possession; then man being superior in intelligence to all the creatures of the earth, is it arrogating too much

to expect a higher destiny for him than is allotted to the worm? If it be otherwise, the superiority of his intelligence is a curse, for he has constant reason to repine at the brevity, no less than at the vanity, of life. You must now be convinced of your error; acknowledge it, and repeat after me the only words which can ensure you eternal happiness! Allah! Illah Mahomet Rasur Allah!'

"Abou Rassed was fool enough to smile at my request.

"'My friend,' said he, 'whenever an argument has the power to change the colour of my beard, perhaps it may alter the complexion of my mind, and both having become of another hue, it is then possible it may make a cameleon of my father's creed.'

"'Heaven be with you, Abou Rassed!' said I, 'there is no hope of your salvation; I wish from the bottom of my heart you were a true believer, but I fear you will die as you have lived, a Pagan. Farewell! Abou Rassed, if I prosper in the world, I will certainly come and see you.'

"'If you do not prosper,' replied the old

Zabian, 'come, and you will still be welcome.'—I hurried out of the house, for I felt if I remained much longer, I should again be playing the woman."

"Well, said Michelaki, interrupting the Dervish, "for one who talks such nonsense about the stars, you spoke very good morality to that abominable pagan: to-morrow, you must continue your story, and I hope finish it, for I am longing to hear the adventure with this new Beltha of yours, who sent you to the arsenal."

CHAPTER X.

The life of a Dervish is a sure rampart against all public calamities and private afflictions.

MONTEFI.

"YOU are aware, Michelaki," continued the adventurer, resuming his story the following evening, "that the Sofis of Persia, and the Fakirs of Egypt, are the Dervishes of Turkey. Of these there are two principal sects in Stamboul, the Howling and the Whirling Dervishes. The former honour their Creator by screaming like jackals for whole hours together; they assemble in the mosque of their convent, squat themselves down in a circle, and howl the ninety-nine names of Allah, rocking their bodies to and fro, and continuing their worship, till their tongues cleave to their palates, and they drop down from sheer exhaustion.

"The whirling Dervishes are great Theriakis, or eaters of opium, and consequently they have many celestial visions, and are subject to fits of pious fury. In these moments of inspiration, they worship their Maker by whirling their bodies round and round with the most edifying velocity, and gash their limbs, and sear their flesh with red-hot irons. The religious zeal of the latter sect is generally supposed to be the most pleasing to the Apostle, and is certainly the most applauded by the devout of both sexes.

"'Now, whether,' thought I, 'shall I become a howler or a whirler? both have their advantages and their disadvantages. But which way does my vocation lie? my lungs are excellent, and I never was in better wind, I can howl like a very lion.' I determined to try my powers in that way, and I did so, forgetting I was in the public street; but I had not howled above a couple of the attributes of the Almighty, before I was conscious of my folly. I looked about me to see if any one observed me, and what was my confusion to find the eyes of fifty passengers on me! One said, 'Praise be to God!

he is mad, he is the favourite of Heaven? 'Blessed be the Prophet!' cried another; 'he has lost his senses, he is a saint.' 'Here, good man,' said an old woman, 'hold your hand, this is for my husband who is sick, pray for a speedy release from his sufferings,' and with that she put a gold bergoot into my hand.

"I commenced mumbling to myself, as if I was praying with might and main for the blessings of widowhood for the charitable donor; but ere I finished, up stepped a well-dressed Effendi, followed by a slave carrying his pipe, and putting a miserable paras on my palm, which the light wind very nearly blew away, he said—'This is for the sake of the Apostle, and the soul of my father, whose head is just now in jeopardy; pray for his safety.' I mumbled out two words for the munificent Effendi, and waited to see if there were any other pious passengers inclined to relieve a saint; but no one came. I set up another howl, longer and louder than the first; the deep intonation of my Allah! Illah! was exquisite; in a moment I observed all the latticed windows around me crowded with women. In the one over my

head I could distinctly hear the giggling of young voices; one melodious Israfil cried, 'Oh, my two eyes! what a well-shaped santon! what a handsome madman!' another exclaimed, 'Wallah el Nebi! by Allah and the Prophet, what a beautiful saint! Oh that we could get him to pray for us at the tomb of Scheik Abdriman!'

"Presently an Abyssinian slave came out of the passage by which I stood, and put half a dozen piastres in my hand; 'This, my young santon,' said she, 'is to beg your prayers for a poor Ulema, in his sixty-seventh year, who is about to enter the married state.'

"'God help him!' I exclaimed, 'he has much need of prayers, I will do all I can for him; tell your poor mistress when she comes home to invoke the genius of the giam.' This, thought I, is no other than the house of the old Ulema, who was to have been married to the little man-slayer, (blessings on her fair hand!)—Abou Rassed's counsel has not been followed, or, if followed, it has most likely failed, and this is her destined prison. I will mark the house; who knows what the giam

may not do? I was going away, when I observed a miserable object coming out of a mosque on the other side of the street, his lips moving with all the fervour of devotion as he approached, and a remnant of straw matting under his arm, which served for a praying carpet. 'Heaven grant,' said I, 'it may never be my destiny to know the poverty of that poor wretch!' I was in the act of giving a last howl as he passed by; the sacred inspiration of insanity attracted his notice, and arrested his steps. I saw the beggar fumbling in the pockets of his tattered sherwals; the miserable mendicant approached me, and, to my utter astonishment, put half a piastre into my hand; 'This, holy man,' he exclaimed, in a tone of the devoutest enthusiasm, 'this is for the law! pray for the extermination of the infidels.' I mumbled as usual till the beggar's back was turned, and then came another application for my prayers. The man who now approached me, was no less a person than the Imam of the mosque, which the beggar had come out of. 'Grant, holy Prophet!' said I, 'it be for no bad purpose the Imam is coming to me; priests are

not wont to ask the prayers of santons; prayer is their prerogative, and they are jealous of it.' While I was thus debating on the purpose of his visit, he accosted me with profound respect. 'May your inspiration never be less, santon!' said he; 'oblige me, I beseech you, so far as to honour me with your prayers. It is not one or two simple supplications I require, those I have leisure to make myself; but a good hour of prayer, and in the very spot where you are now standing. I live close by, I will return in an hour, and pay you four piastres for your trouble.' I bowed my head in token of acquiescence; I thought I might as well earn the four piastres, so I set to exercising my jaws, standing, as I had been told, on the appointed spot, on which, unfortunately, the hot sun was glaring with noon-day strength. I was almost roasted alive, yet I continued to mumble away the slow minutes of the hour, not daring to move, lest the Imam should be watching from his window. The hour passed away, and no Imam came; another did I wait broiling in the hot sun, but no Imam made his appearance; I cursed him in my heart, and then wiping away the perspi-

ration which trickled o'er my features, I was preparing to depart, when in the window of the house which the Imam entered, I heard a roar of laughter. I looked up and beheld the shutters thrown back, and the fat priest leaning on his elbows, his sanctified features convulsed with merriment. This was too much to endure, I withdrew my eyes, and ran off with my utmost speed, endeavouring to escape from the torture of my own reflections.

"'It is evident,' said I, 'Heaven intended me from the beginning of the world to be a howling Dervish:' so I turned my steps towards Scutari, one of the suburbs of the city, where there is a convent of this order. Being introduced to the superior, I told him my history in a few words, dwelling much on my studies in theology in the Medressé; on the nature of my education, being intended for the church; and also on my proficiency in astronomy and medicine, the twin sciences which I had studied under the most celebrated Chaldean in the world. Such parts of my story as had any reference to the influence of the Goddess Beltha over my destiny, I of course

suppressed. I supplicated to be received into the blessed order of Howling Dervishes; but my supplications would have been in vain, had they not been backed by the all-convincing argument of the widow's gold. This opened to me the door of the convent. I was received into the society, in consideration of my ecclesiastical standing (being already half an Imam), without having to go through the ordinary period of probation.

"On my reception, the superior read me a long lecture on the duties of a Dervish. I was divested of my worldly attire; my fine turban was replaced by a coarse felt cap, of a conical shape, without brim or border,—to keep off the hot sun being deemed unnecessary, as the sacred Humai, the bird of paradise, was constantly hovering over the unprotected heads of Dervishes, and affording them a sufficient shade. My gay benish was exchanged for the common woollen kirkhah, or Dervish habit, being the torn coat, which the prophet Moses wore. In the reception exhortation, the ordinary initiatory words were used—'Thy comrades said they would remain a little time in the world,

but they have left it for good and all, having found in it neither stability nor repose. Rise then quickly, young man, and join us, and take good care to avoid the steps of those who have either lost or abandoned the true path.'

" The second chief Dervish then asked me if I had read the holy Tessaauf, a book of regulation for religious communities? To which question, having replied in the affirmative, he said, ' Then must you be acquainted with the ten qualities which the blessed Hassan-al-Basri (be his name honoured!) says a true Dervish should possess in common with a dog. To be always hungry — to defile not his master's house — to have no certain habitation — to watch by night — to care not for leaving an inheritance behind — to follow one master — to be contented with the humblest station — to put up with bad usage — to love the hand which feeds — and not to snap at that which strikes.' I immediately received the first lesson in howling; and although the practices of the heterodox whirlers were loudly condemned, I found that many of them were in vogue; such as rubbing a red-hot iron

over the tongue, sticking daggers into the legs and arms, and a few sleight-of-hand tricks, for the edification of the vulgar. On ordinary occasions, we seldom did ourselves any injury; we used hollow-bladed daggers, in which was concealed the fresh blood of lambs. But before grandees and women whoses miles we cared for, we mangled ourselves sometimes for their entertainment most piteously. In a little time, my howling was universally admired: pious people came from the ends of the metropolis to hear my indefatigable roar. We professed to live miserably in the convent; the literal meaning of the word Dervish signifies poverty; but no people fared better. While we preached abstinence to those whose alms we solicited, in private we all led the life of giaours; we laughed at the ramazan; we drank wine when we could get it; we swallowed rum when we could not. We were the merriest set of beings in the Sultan's dominions; we had no labour but begging. The howling soon ceased to be a toil, it even became a pleasure; the exercise was a banquet to my lungs. I was the only

member of the community who had not travelled; all the others were experienced, shrewd, and even polished vagabonds, who had strolled over the world on God's bounty, eating the bread of the poor, the sick, and the indigent. Each man's girdle was decorated with some precious stones, or other natural curiosity of the country he had visited. We had those in our convent who had wandered over the deserts of Sahara; who had visited the mines of Samarcand; who had walked over the countries of the Hindi; who had made pilgrimages to both the sacred kebles of Mecca and El Cods, the holy Jerusalem. But there was one little defect prevalent enough amongst the inmates of the convent, and that was infidelity. Abou Rassed, the pagan, was not more firmly persuaded that the blessed Apostle was an impostor, than were two-thirds of our religious community. There was another peculiarity in the brotherhood; they never expressed any hatred towards the infidels; on the contrary, I observed those who had travelled most were least disposed to curse the Christians, who oc-

casionally visited our convent. I was the only individual who had virtue enough to pray daily to the most merciful Allah for the extermination of all Christians, Jews, and Pagans, with the exception of Abou Rassed.

"My superior learning soon gained me an ascendancy over many of my brother Dervishes, and the fame of my astrological and medical science was already spread over the capital. I adopted Abou Rassed's system: I gave charms for the cure of every disease, and medicines, merely as adjuncts, whose natures coincided with the stars, and whose properties were indicated for the benefit of any particular organ, by the corresponding shape of the root, or leaf of the plant. I accomplished wonders; the convent was crowded with my visitors from morning till night. Had I died at that blessed time, my name would now be in the calendar of the saints, instead of being in that of the condemned culprits. Yes, Michelaki, I should have had a tomb with a fine dome placed over my relics, and monthly visited, like Scheik Abdriman's, by all the religious population, in-

stead of having this chain round my leg, and that confounded chiaous, with his long stick, for my sole visitor.

"At the time I speak of, I was the most highly reputed dervish in Stamboul. I was on the top of the minaret of ambition. That detestable Goddess Beltha again shed her calamitous influence on my head: I was hurled from the summit of the crescent to the depths of despair.

"For the third time in my life I fell in love, and for the third time I was ruined. In an evil hour, it occurred to me to visit the spot where I had made my first essay in the way of howling, and where I believed the Ulema resided who was to have wedded the little man-slayer. I recognised the house; it was the day on which the women visit the bath; I resolved to lurk about the premises till such time as I should see either the slave, with whom I had before spoken, or her mistress. I had not waited above an hour before I saw the slave approaching the house, and beckoning to her to follow me, I entered the shop of a rayah, where I had an opportunity of conversing with her,

without exciting observation. She told me, neither her mistress nor any of the inmates of the harem were suffered to go out, not even to the bath. I asked her to be the bearer of a message to her mistress. She stared in my face, and then told me she was not mad. I put a ten-piastre piece into her hand, and had an instantaneous proof of her good sense. She said I spoke like a reasonable man: she consented to deliver any message I might honour her with the conveyance of to her poor mistress, whose heart was very sick.—'I was aware of her illness,' said I, 'therefore have I sought you; tell her the Dervish said she was very ill, worse than she imagines, but not so bad as she ought to be. Tell her, this night her horoscope indicates a sudden indisposition, which, to resist, would be to fly in the face of the planets. Tell her, moreover, the physician of her heart is he who reads the stars, and understands the giam, in which her destiny is written. That physician am I, the Dervish Ali, who is to be sought for in the convent of Scutari, and who is known to the husband of every sick woman who desires to be healed.' I endeavoured to

impress these words on the mind of the slave by several repetitions, and having duly tutored her, I returned to the convent."

Here Michelaki interrupted the Dervish; "To-morrow, my friend," said he, "I trust you will get to the end of your interminable story."

CHAPTER XI.

Alas! good fathers, human passions
Make fools of folks of all professions.
The Barbaresque.

THE Dervish having resumed his story, proceeded to relate his interview with the man-slayer.

"The following morning," continued he, "I was summoned to the house of the Ulema, who was called Abdallah, or the Slave of God. Being ushered into his divan, I seated myself, and after the customary pause, which courtesy has established, to allow a visitor time to draw his breath, the Ulema salaamed me with marked respect.

"'Dervish,' said he, 'you cannot be ignorant of the bad favour in which your commu-

nity are with the regular ministers of the law. You may therefore wonder at my sending for you. Your fame, however, as a hakkim, and a man of science, is spread over the world, and having a sick wife, I have sent for you to cure her.'

" 'May your condescension never be less! venerable Ulema,' I replied: 'it is very true the slanderers and the liars always seek their victims among the virtuous, therefore have the poor dervishes been misrepresented to the pillars of the faith, your venerable corps. But that my poor name should be known to one who is the burning light of Islam, is truly wonderful.—Alas, Effendi! I am a simple man, unworthy to kiss your honoured footsteps; unfit to be called the meanest of the servants who breathe the air your Excellency respires.'

" 'Wallah-el-Nebi!' exclaimed the Ulema, 'by Allah and the Prophet! (blessed be his name!) you speak like a man of understanding. You have heard, no doubt, of my name in the world, of the five-and-twenty Commentaries I have written on the first verse of the first

chapter of the blessed Koran. You have, no doubt, heard of these celebrated performances, and therefore am I indebted to my reputation for your respect.'

"'Who has not heard of your commentaries?' I replied. 'Are there not four corners in the world; in which of them, I ask you, is your fame unknown? Does not El Caf surround the universe; on which high peak of that vast mountain, I would be glad to know, are the glorious commentaries of my Lord unheard of? Allah! Illah! is there a human being on the surface of the earth who does not know your name?'

"I said no more; I had the heart of the Ulema in my right hand, and I squeezed it like a sponge, wringing out its weakness at every grasp, yet feeling the expansion of its flimsy substance whenever I relaxed my fingers.

"'God is most wonderful!' said Abdallah. 'How has it happened that two of the cleverest men in the country should have been so long in the same capital, and unknown to each other? Now, Dervish,' continued he, 'let us talk of the sick woman; the angel of death has

been flapping his wings over her couch since last night; your arrival has been much wished for: if you do not cure her, nobody else can. You need not see her, I suppose, my friend; it will do to tell you her ailment, will it not?'

"'Not so, venerable Ulema,' I replied; 'I must see her, and speak with her, and find out under what propitious planet the herb flourishes which is adapted to her temperament. I am no magician; the stars I do study as the Pagan did who wrote the golden verses, and manifested therein what constellations are favourable to the growth of certain plants, and what properties are in those which coincide with certain planets, whose aspects have an influence over the production of certain maladies.' This elaborate description of my system of medicine delighted the old man, whose only fear was that I professed to work by supernatural means.

"He immediately accompanied me to the harem. I found the invalid lying on a mattress, groaning piteously, and surrounded by a group of women, some with fans flapping away the flies, others with vessels of sherbet pressing her to drink. I motioned these women

to retire, the slave alone I suffered to remain, and ordered her to support the patient's head. The Ulema, however, kept his ground; he stood close by me as I stooped to question the invalid; I wished him in the bottomless ocean, but I had no plausible excuse for bidding him retire. My patient saw my dilemma, and she found the means of getting me out of it. She made a sudden bounce from her recumbent position towards that part of the couch where the Ulema was standing, and at the same time uttered a piercing shriek, which she had only occasion to repeat to cause poor Abdallah to fly from the couch in great dismay.

"'Tis the crisis,' said I; 'you had better retire, she is in that excited state in which the sight of those who are best loved cannot be endured. Go down, I will be with you in a few seconds, and bring you, I trust, a good report.'

"Having led him to the door, I approached the invalid; she was perfectly tranquil; I lifted her veil, every doubt was dispelled by a single glance; it was my little friend the manslayer, beautiful as ever, and blooming as a rose. I

felt her pulse, I pressed her hand; the gentle pressure was returned, but still she gazed on me with an inquisitive eye; I understood it's question. 'I am one,' said I, in a whisper, 'who knows the secrets of the giam as well as Abou Rassed; who loves you better than a legion of Janissaries.' I saw the surprise, mingled with a softer emotion, as I fancied, which overspread her features. 'Words,' said I, 'my beautiful Katourah,' (for so I heard her called,) 'are now more precious than rubies; be ill till I tell you to be well; no shriek can be too loud at the Ulema's approach; no love can be usefully bestowed on a man you cannot see; therefore, forget the Janissary, and fix your thoughts on the Dervish.'

"'Tis easily said,' replied my patient; 'can one love a Janissary in the morning, and a Dervish the same evening—have you ever seen me before?'

"'A million of times,' said I, 'have I beheld you in the invisible world. Your beauty has long been the subject of my dreams, your lovely person the object of my adoration. I have pined away, because I could not speak

with you, till my body has become shadowless; I have made sighs and tears my meat and drink; in short, if you would not see me dead at your disdainful feet, tell me to live, desire me to hope.'

"'Oh, live by all means!' replied Katourah, smiling most graciously, 'though you do not seem to have pined away so much as one might have thought who knew your diet; but since you have existed so long on sighs and tears for my sake, I suppose I must live on cold water and sherbet a little time for yours, or may I eat a kibab of lamb for my dinner, dear hakkim?'

"'Eat a kibab of lamb?' said I, 'Heaven forbid! your's is a very serious malady, and lamb is eamb, therefore you must avoid it's flesh. Eating in public too before persons who may throw an evil eye on the repast is very bad, in the dead of the night I have no objection to your taking a boiled fowl and a pilau smothered in sour milk, but nothing more.'

"'Now, hakkim,' said Katourah, 'tell me,

by my soul! do you love me as well as the Janissary did? Speak, by the giam!'

"'Then, by your soul, and the giam! and, oh! by what is more precious than all, by your two black eyes! no Janissary ever loved you as I do.'

"'Well,' replied Katourah, 'I suppose I must love you; I cannot help myself; if you be, as you say, a supernatural man, who read the stars like a kitab, and understand the wonderful giam better than the blessed Koran, what can I say, or do? You have stolen my heart by your powerful charms, and, perhaps, you had better keep it since you have it, so long as the Ulema is not the possessor, *Allah Karim!* But now that I love you, Dervish, let me put you on your guard; there is another wife of the Ulemas here, not so young, perhaps, as I am, but who has bright eyes, and blooming looks, yet sleepless nights. If you are the santon who many months ago made the noise under the window, as the slave informs me, it is you who have spoiled her sweet slumbers. Beware of her, Dervish; for now that I love you, should I find you even glan-

cing your eye at her, I would tear your soul out, I would be revenged of you, were I to die for it the next instant.'

" ' Oh, Allah !' thought I, ' this is indeed the little manslayer. Heavens, what a fury ! better would it it be to enrage a she-tiger, than to rouse the anger of this little woman.' The attendants, whom I had thrust out of the room, now made their appearance, and one of them brought me a message from a sick lady in an adjoining chamber, requesting my immediate assistance. I rose to follow the attendant ; I dared not look for permission in the eyes of my little fury, I knew it would not be granted, and I could not refuse visiting the other invalid. But I had not reached the door, when I had a new symptom of the unabated violence of my first patient's shrieking disorder. The terrible noise which rent my ear was Katourah's shriek ; another, and a shriller followed as I left the room, and then a loud and continuous scream was kept up all the time I was in the apartment of the other woman. I would have gone back to have endeavoured to pacify her, but the attendant would not allow me ; she said her

other mistress was considerably worse, and would probably commence screaming also if I kept her waiting. My soul was in confusion; I saw the clouds gathering in the heavens; I already heard the tempest, it only remained for the thunderbolt to crush me. I was led to the divan, where my new patient was reclining; there was only the attendant and confidant, who conducted me to the chamber, present. The other women were assembled round the couch of the shrieker. I removed her veil with that bold impudence which a woman seldom dreams of combating; and to my infinite surprise I gazed on a beauty in the prime of life, neither young nor old, but probably about that critical period of beauty, when time has mellowed every charm, and paused for a moment before he suffers a single perfection to be impaired. She was probably thirty, the age, our blessed Prophet has assured us, the houries and their faithful lovers are to attain in Paradise, and to remain at for ever. Fools might have missed in her loveliness the playful innocence of the gazel, the youthful levity of the antelope, the freshness of the

morning, and the delicate softness of the young May flower. I missed these not: I found in her perfect features the settled beauty of the full-grown fawn, the matured sedateness of the impassioned dove, the genial glow of the noon-day sun, and the fine bold beauty of the expanded rose. For the fourth time of my life I was in love, but deeper, oh, an ocean of the heart's idolatry, deeper than ever.

Having questioned the invalid, whose name she informed me was Zeinab, concerning her disease, she informed me her heart was sick, and she dated her disorder from a day on which she took cold at the window looking at a young saint in the street. 'I have often longed for his prayers, I purchased a few from him at the time for my husband, but now I would be glad to have some for myself, though I am told he is no longer a saint, but a dervish, and a hakkim.'

"'He is, my angel,' I exclaimed; 'since ever he heard the sound of your sweet voice, his heart has been dried up, his breast a furnace. To attract your attention he made himself a santon, and howled under your window; to

gain admittance to your harem, he became a dervish, and a doctor, and put his soul in peril to behold you.'

"I was proceeding in the expression of my admiration, when I heard the discordant voice of the Ulema in the other room. I had just time to press her fair fingers to my lips and forehead, and to hearken to a gentle hint about the jealousy of Katourah, and the fury of her temper, before the Ulema was at the door. I descended with him to the divan. 'Ah! my venerable friend,' said I, 'a terrible fever is running over your house; two of your wives are the victims of the contagion: Heaven guard you from it! I charge you by your beard, avoid their chambers!'

"'What!' exclaimed the Ulema, 'fly in the face of destiny to avoid the evil it hath sent? Min Allah! heaven forbid!'

"'Pillar of the faith,' said I, 'is it not written in the perspicuous book, that when our house is in a blaze, we are to fly from the flames?'

"'True,' replied the Ulema, 'the blessed Koran does say so; I am glad to find you are

acquainted so thoroughly with its doctrines. But what unenlightened mind can understand them without the lamp of knowledge; that lamp is the work of my hand, the five-and-twenty commentaries I have written. Behold them,' said he, approaching the divan, where I found he had deposited the valuable volumes for my edification.

"'What would you not give, O Dervish, to have the privilege of perusing them? what treasure would you not offer for the loan of them?'

'I would give my eyes for the blessing,' I exclaimed, 'but that I could not read without them.'

"'You shall have that blessing,' he replied; 'preserve them, as you would the pearl of your existence, your very soul! My servant shall carry them to your convent, you may keep them for a week, but you must read night and day. Reckon yourself the most fortunate of men, the most favoured of my friends.' I found the commentaries had banished every recollection of the fever and his wives; so, after making suitable acknowledgments for the loan of the precious books, which I verily believe

was only made to avoid giving me a fee, I told him I must hurry home to prepare some medicines for the sick women. The servant accompanied me with the commentaries; I eased him of his burden at the door of the convent: I was soon surrounded by my curious brethren, all eager to know what books I was loaded with. When I told them they were commentaries on the Koran, the performance of a venerable Ulema, they laughed outright. You must know, we Dervishes hold the Ulemas as our mortal enemies: I was therefore not surprised at the ridicule bestowed on the precious tomes; but I was somewhat startled at the proposal of one mad fellow, whom we called the Delhi Dervish, or the mad dervish, who was very anxious to set fire to the five-and-twenty years' labour of the slave of God, merely to ascertain if so dull a composition as a commentary could give out light or heat. I bundled up my books as quickly as possible into my room, for I knew the Delhi was capable of any wickedness. Having deposited them safely as I hoped, I went to the common refectory where we dined, and having done ample justice

to an admirable pilau, I retired to my apartment. The moment I opened the door, a volume of smoke rushed out which almost suffocated me. 'Oh, blessed Prophet!' I exclaimed,' 'my room is in a blaze; I endeavoured to drag out my furniture; I advanced farther and farther amidst the impenetrable smoke; I could see no flames, but I distinguished at last a heap of red-hot ashes in the very middle of the room, the carpet having been removed from the stone floor. I opened the window, the smoke at length disappeared. The smouldering ashes were the remains of the five-and-twenty commentaries of the Ulema!!! I was in hopes it had been some portion of my own property which had been destroyed. But my horror was complete; the ashes I gazed on were those of Abdallah's soul!

"I sought the mad villain, who I had no doubt was the author of the mischief, in every corner of the convent, but luckily for him I found him not. I passed a wretched night thinking of the ruin in which the destruction of these execrable commentaries might involve me. In the morning, according to my promise,

I returned with a heavy heart to the Ulema's house, for I thought it was better to keep up appearances for a few days, than to excite immediate suspicion, by absenting myself altogether.

"The Ulema received me with greater kindness than the day before. He asked me how I liked the commentaries, if the interpretations were not rendered with great force, if the arguments were not full of fire. I thought I should have sunk into the earth. 'Oh, Pillar of the Faith!' I exclaimed, 'they are indeed, as you say, full of fire, and they have been perused, I assure you, with a burning zeal to discover the elements of truth.—How are the sick women? Shall I visit them alone, or will you risk the danger of accompanying me to the contagious chamber?'

"'The slave shall accompany you, my son,' replied the Ulema; 'but do not be so long as you were yesterday; these women love to gossip with their hakkims.'

"The slave having made her appearance at the door, I followed her up-stairs. 'Let us first see Zeinab, my pretty conductress,' said I,

she most needs the hakkim.' I accordingly visited this charmer, and every moment I remained with her I became more enamoured of her beauty. She told me that Katourah was enraged with me for visiting her, in defiance of her express command, the shriek, and that I must endeavour to pacify her. I proceeded, with an awful foreboding of some impending evil, to the chamber of Katourah.

"The little fury was sitting up when I entered; her eyes were like two globes of living flame, flashing lightning on me as I approached.

"'Robber of the soul!' exclaimed she in a voice of thunder, 'have you visited your mistress in the other chamber? have you made a mockery of my weakness? have you laughed at my credulity? Allah! Illah! you were the fools to dream of imposing on me. You told me you came here to love me, and me alone; you swore by my eyes Zeinab was not your mistress; and, like a dog, you lied in your throat, for it was her alone you came to see. Murder! murder! Ulema, I say, come to your harem, there is a villain within its walls! Call the Ulema!—Slave, clap your hands!—Ulema, I

say, your harem is dishonoured! there stands the wretch. Help! for the love of the Prophet! assistance for the sake of our master's beard—help! help!'

"I was utterly confounded. 'Woman!' I whispered, as softly as possible, 'by all the planets! you are mistaken; 'tis you alone I came to see: for the sake of Allah—for the honour of your mother'——But I was not suffered to proceed; the Ulema entered, panting for breath, and foaming at the mouth.

"'What words are these!' he exclaimed, 'Who talked of dishonour in my house! Speak! by your souls! which of you made this outcry!'

"'Pillar of the faith!' cried Katourah; 'the Dervish is a villain! he is Zeinab's lover, I swear it by your soul! I heard their vile discourse; I saw them laugh at your white beard; I could bear it no longer, so I called for help.'

"'What words are these!' I exclaimed; 'the woman is certainly gone mad! I told you she had a fever; this is the fury of her disorder. Heaven restore her! Pay no attention to her words; you heard how she shrieked yester-

day; you saw the dreadful attempt she made to fly at you: for the sake of the Apostle keep out of her way!' The Ulema was perplexed, he knew not what to think; I might have carried the day, and, at all events, have been suffered to escape, had not Zeinab most unfortunately presented herself at this critical moment to exculpate herself from the accusations of Katourah.

"'Yes, there she is!' cried the latter, 'deny it if you can, Zeinab? Did I not see this Dervish pressing your hand to his forehead? did I not hear you say how long you loved him, and did he not ——?' Katourah's voice here was overwhelmed by Zeinab's recriminations.

"'No, no, Katourah,' she cried, 'it will not do to throw your shame on an innocent head; it will not do to palm your lover on a true and faithful wife; it will not do to cram foul falsehoods down my honoured husband's throat. This man, O Ulema! who calls himself a Dervish, is her old lover. I swear it by your gracious head! And now having quarrelled with him, she seeks to be revenged of him, and to throw the odium of her conduct on me.'

" ' This is past all endurance!' I exclaimed. ' I will not stop another moment in this house, for I find every inmate leagued in a conspiracy against me.' I rushed towards the door, but the Ulema was too watchful of my movements. He seized me by the long sleeve of my kirkhah, which had a better claim then than it had yet had to the title of ' the torn garment.' The door was already thronged with servants; there was no possibility of escape; I submitted to my destiny. I was sent to prison. Oh, what a night I spent, cursing my folly, reviling the Goddess Beltha, and abusing the infuriated Katourah, who had brought all this calamity on my head. I expected to be bastinadoed to death in the morning; my inability to produce the unlucky commentaries, I knew, would go hard with me. ' It is evident,' said I, ' the stars are leagued against me; it is in vain to contend with the planets. I must face my misfortunes like a worthy disciple of Abou Rassed.'

" The following morning I was taken before the Cadi; I found my case had not only been heard, but decided on before my appearance.

The Cadi, however, still made a show of justice; he asked me what I had to say to the charge of the venerable Ulema? I declared my innocence as long as I was able, and with as loud a voice as the occasion demanded. He bade me restore the twenty-five Commentaries of the Pillar of the Faith. I told him I was sorry, very sorry I could not; but they were unfortunately burnt. The Ulema stared at me; his eyes starting from their sockets; his mouth wide open; the cold sweat of despair glistening on his forehead; his two hands clasped over his head: he attempted to address me, but his voice failed; he uttered one loud groan, and fainted away. A Chiaous was instantly dispatched to search for the books, and to seize on my effects.

"'This comes, Dervish,' said the Cadi, 'of reading the stars and consulting giams. Did the stars tell you to breed confusion in the harem of this good man, and steal his books? Do you not remember the words of Zahed—A covetous Dervish is a highway robber?"

"'Effendi,' I cried, 'robber I am none, your messenger will find the ashes of the com-

mentaries which have been burnt by a madman. Neither am I a star-gazer; I study the sciences, it is true, but I am no magician; the words of Zahed I remember well, and it is he, if I mistake not, who says, A Dervish without science, is a house without a door. I was in hopes my words had produced a favourable impression on the Cadi; but when I heard him speak of me as an impostor, I had little to expect. He proceeded to pass sentence on me, having prefaced my condemnation with a proverb, *Dervischlik Kerkhaden bellu de ghil*—it is not the coat which makes the dervish. My punishment, he said, should be a light one, in consideration of my previous good character; I should only receive three hundred stripes, and be kept to hard labour for ten years. The secretary of the Cadi was standing by me; I whispered in his ear for the remission of the three hundred stripes, 'the Cadi should have three hundred piastres.' The horrible Chiaouses were grinning at me, fingering their abominable sticks, which I expected to feel every moment on my bare feet; but the secretary caught the Cadi's eye, I observed him scratch

his nose three times, there was some manœuvre on the Cadi's part which I did not understand, but the secretary said to me in a low whisper, 'You must make it four hundred,'—'Agreed, I replied.'

"'Away with him to prison,' exclaimed the Cadi, 'we shall have him privately bastinadoed.' They hurried me off to my dungeon, where I was duly visited by the secretary; my well-stored girdle was soon as empty as my stomach; after being half famished in that accursed prison, I was sent here. The rest of my miserable story you are acquainted with; if you would have its moral, think of my ruling passion, and behold my present condition.'

CHAPTER XII.

Hub. There is your hand and seal for what I did.
King John. How oft the means to do ill deeds
Makes deeds ill done! Hadst thou not been by,
A fellow, by the hand of nature marked,
Quoted and sign'd to do a deed of shame,
This murder had not come into my mind.

SHAKSPEARE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the length of the Dervish's story, Michelaki listened with imploring patience to every part in which there was no allusion to the heavenly bodies. His soul was sick of stars and giams, he loathed the title of the astharlab, and he never heard the name of that abominable pagan, Abou Rassed, without touching the image of the Madonna which he wore about his neck. But

as no man in the world, with the solitary exception of Jean Jacques Rousseau, ever gave an authentic history of his life, however criminal it might be, without propitiating in some degree the favour of the patient listener or reader, Michelaki felt a friendship for the adventurer insensibly steal over his spirit, in spite of all his efforts to reprobate his principles.

When the period of the Greek's redemption approached, even the joyful prospect of freedom was shadowed by the pain of separating from a good-humoured fellow-sufferer. And the poor Dervish, who had still eight long years of slavery before his eyes, and the bitter reflection of his life's vicissitudes to endure, had still a tear for the loss of a kind-hearted companion, albeit he was an unbeliever.

The term of Michelaki's punishment at length expired, but less than a hundred piastres could not bring the fact to the recollection of the Captain of the Arsenal.

Many of Michelaki's friends were in affluence, but none were inclined to purchase the liberty of a former acquaintance at so dear a price.

The Dervish was aware of the unfortunate predicament in which his companion stood. He was still possessed of fifty piastres, his earthly fortune; and these he put at the disposal of his friend. He procured the means of sending a letter to Abou Rassed, which was couched in the following pithy terms.

"Friend of my soul! the stars have been unpropitious. I am in prison, and in want of every thing but your prayers; as an equivalent for which, send me fifty piastres. They cannot be bestowed on one in greater need of them than your ill-starred friend, ALI."

"That very evening the Dervish had a reply from the Astrologer; these were the contents:—

"My son, I have no ill-starred friends. The cry of a chastised child is no proof of parental malice. I do not blame you, that you repine at what you cannot prevent: why should I! I only grieve that heaven has not endowed you with a better understanding. I heard of you when you were prosperous, but you did not come to me, nor did I then choose to be your

seeker. But now that you are in poverty, and in a prison, I see no reason why I should control my wishes: if it please the stars, I shall visit you to-morrow. I rejoice you did not ask me for one piastre beyond the fifty, for I should be sorry to refuse you any thing at such a time. Your demand has emptied the purse, but not diminished the friendship, of ABOU RASSED."

The Dervish's own hand counted down the ransom of the Greek; the gaoler asked him if he were mad to strip himself of his last paras for the soul of an infidel.

"I hate the giaours in my heart," replied the Dervish, "in the day of their prosperity, but in the night of adversity they are to be tolerated as the children of Allah: and a community of suffering may even present them to our hearts in the relation of step-brothers."

The charm which had long linked the Dervish and the Greek was unriveted. The former dragged the clanking fetters at his heels to his dungeon, as the latter was led to the door; he did not wait to see him pass the threshold, for he was ashamed of the tears which trickled

down his face; he hid himself in his now solitary cell, while his companion, with the light step and the heedless heart of a Greek rayah, was turning to the home whose insecurity was unfelt or little cared for.

In the mean time few changes had taken place in the family of Suleiman: the Aga had continued to ravage his district, Achmet was still the willing agent of his master's passions, but he was about quitting Bournarbashi, being rewarded for all his zeal in the service of Suleiman, with an appointment in the customs of Candia, for which Island he was to set out the following month. The two boys had grown apace, and time had cemented their hatred; the little Zuleika had become a blooming girl, and every day of sunshine that expanded a petal of the budding rose, put a thorn in the temper of Yussuf's mother.

Things were in this state, when Suleiman received intelligence that Michelaki had arrived at the Dardanelles, and was intriguing against him with the Cadi and governor of that place. It appeared that the Greek had as yet no certainty of the fate of his wife; the worst he knew was,

Moslem Governor had adopted his little boy, and called him his *ahret ogli*, or child of another life. Suleiman lost no time in dispatching Achmet, to endeavour by every possible means to persuade the rayah that his wife was in existence, and should be delivered, with her child, into the hands of her husband, whenever he appeared. The crafty agent proceeded on his perfidious mission; he delivered the lying message of his master, he pressed the necessity of Michelaki's immediate return, he called him his dear friend, and asked him had he not been a true friend to his family during his absence? The Greek shrugged up his shoulders; Achmet made him drunk, and talked about the descendants of Themistocles. Michelaki followed like a lamb, but not before the agent of villainy called down his Apostle from the heavens, (query, did he come?) to witness the love he bore his friend, whom he now led to destruction, avoiding as much as possible all conversation about his wife, and shifting the discourse as often as he could do so without exciting suspicion. Michelaki was sober as soon as he found himself in the presence of the Aga; but his

hesitating step and trembling salaam evinced his fears, and it was only when Suleiman encouraged him with his perfidious smile, and made mention of his wife and child, that the recollection of the villainy which had separated him from both flashed across his mind. While he bowed his body to the dust, and stooped like an abject slave to kiss the garment of his enemy, indignation struggled in his throat for utterance, and vengeance lurked in the glance which duplicity itself could not subdue. He had yet no absolute certainty of the fate of his poor wife; various reports were spread abroad: some said that she was dead, others that she had been seen in Stamboul, and some even affirmed that she was yet an inmate of the harem. No sooner did he approach the door, than the Aga addressed him in the most condescending manner.

"Ah, is it you, my son!" he cried, motioning Michelaki to release the robe he was pressing to his lips, (a mark of great kindness to an inferior,)—"how has it been with you? have you been fortunate and happy? doubtless you have: thank God! Mashalla! Providence

has been kind to you. I am told you have fought like a true believer; the Sultan in his mercy (glory to his house!) has suffered you to trample on the enemies of God's Prophet; to shed the accursed blood of the eaters of pork and drinkers of wine. Mashallah, how wonderful is Providence!

"I have been a father to your family since your departure; they have eaten my bread,—and why not? does it not all come from Heaven? and is it not our duty to feed the very dogs, much more our poor rayahs? Poor Giaours, when they pay the haratch tax, the Prophet, blessed be his beard! tells us it is not only unlawful to kill them, but it is even commendable to throw them the crumbs from our table. God is most merciful! By-and-by you must see your family. That little boy of yours is fit to be the son of a true believer: I love him as I do my own child, but I suppose you must have him? Well, there is no help, but you must let me see the little Kafir often. I fear he is now asleep, so you had better come in the morning and take away your family. (Michelaki sighed—To-morrow!) Inshallah! if it please

God. You look fatigued; go along and sit down with my honest Arnaouts to supper; you are all Roumi, true Greeks: their fare is homely, but bread and salt is a holy feast under a friendly roof."

"It is, Effendi," said the Greek, with emphasis.

"Get along, eat and drink, and to-morrow you shall be merry with your family. Let him have a cup of coffee, Achmet, or even two, if he desire it."

Michelaki shuddered, his voice faltered; "Too much honour," he replied, "for the lowest of your slaves; too much kindness, Effendi, to the poorest of your rayahs; I cannot eat, my heart is full; your words, Effendi, have been to me meat and drink: I prithee let me go, but not without my child, my wife too, Effendi—oh no, not without the mother of my child, Effendi."

Michelaki was too emphatic in the latter part of his entreaty, his lip quivered, and his features shrank; the hands he stretched forth in the attitude of supplication were clenched: one could fancy he heard the throb-

bing of his heart: his head was bowed, but his eye was not humbled; it rested on Suleiman, and its searching glance penetrated the flinty bosom of the despot.—"I said, my wife, Effendi," repeated Michelaki, "my virtuous, beautiful Emineh! I pray thee, let me behold her now, this night, most excellent Effendi; you surely would not keep the wife of your poor servant, of one who is like the worm you would scorn to trample, from the arms of her long absent husband till the morning. Oh no, your excellency is too noble, too merciful, too magnanimous!"

"Staffer Allah!" cried Suleiman, lifting his two hands above his head, "I keep you from your wife! Heaven forbid! Are you wise, infidel? or have you drunk the hot majoun which makes men mad? have you smoked the wild hashis which intoxicates the brain? God's above all, there is no gratitude on earth! Go, infidel, eat with my servants, unworthy as you are of such an honour; and take the beggars from my house this night, whom I had the charity to feed when you were far away. Go, dog, from my sight; never let me

see you after this night!" The Aga flung out of the room in apparent choler with the Greek; and the first smile which rippled on the latter's cheek, burst over it at the glimpse of hope which the last words of the governor imparted. Achmet congratulated him on his speedy prospect of happiness, and silenced all his excuses as he hurried him off to the servant's supper; there Michelaki was regaled, *malgre lui*, with a savory pilau, smothered in yaourt or sour milk: the very sight of such a dish was sufficient to make any oriental mouth water. Michelaki first tasted a little for politeness, then for pleasure; his spirits revived as he feasted; the rakee bottle went round; the Arnaouts sang interminable songs about Scanderbeg and Burrhous, *Anglice* Pyrrhus, the two great heroes of Epirus; and in the course of half an hour, the oppressed rayah was merged in the drunken patriot; the individual wrongs of the Greek were forgotten, and nothing but the glories of Palæologus were remembered. Coffee was presented to the guest; he liked it not, but it would be an insult to refuse it; it would be to suspect the faith of his host: he sipped a

little, and then by some accident the cup was upset: a second was called for, he vowed he would not take another drop; but his worthy friend Achmet would hear of no excuse; "there was plenty of coffee, thank God! then why not drink it?" He had another cup set before him, and Michelaki got no peace till he swallowed it: he said it was a little burnt, and he made some wry faces; he asked his friend Achmet to taste what he had left, but Achmet thought it needless to do so, for all the coffee had the same burnt flavour; but malesh! it was of no consequence. Michelaki did not think so, for he rose abruptly and left the house without asking one word about his wife or child. He hurried to his own dwelling, some horrible fancy filled his mind; he ran to a neighbouring house for assistance, but some deadly terror, or desperate sickness rendered him inarticulate when he got there; he pointed to a cup, he grasped his vitals as if he suffered unbearable tortures; the leaden hue of death was on his cheeks already, and visible in his glaring eye; he writhed for a few hours in mortal anguish, he groaned the name of Suleiman, and his livid lips were

moved, but whether it was a blessing or a curse that was winged on his last breath to the throne of justice, no one could distinguish. He expired in convulsions, whose frightful workings were terrible to behold; and the shocked spectators were at length glad to see the wretched man released from such cruel suffering. In a country like Turkey, where every individual is endowed with a lively sentiment of the insecurity of human life, a sudden death is a very ordinary occurrence, and therefore not a very awful one.

The Aga had no doubt, from the nature of the melancholy particulars he had heard, but that poor Michelaki had died of apoplexy; he feared he had been too much addicted to rakee; too intemperate an infidel; but it was to be; his end was written in the eternal book, and when the angel of death flapped his sable wings over his house, who was there impious enough to dare to scrutinize the wonderful mysteries of Providence, or to repine at the decrees of Heaven? No Moslem was impious enough to question the justice of such remarks, and no

Greek was foolish enough to sound a suspicion on his tongue of the motives which directed the application of such doctrines. In a little time the fate of Michelaki was forgotten; the past was buried in silence, if not in oblivion, for the present was seldom without its theme of tyranny or terror. The Aga went on in the enjoyment of his petty government as he had done before; he ate and drank the substance of the surrounding peasantry, and slept well. In his official and domestic relations, there was no better pattern of a perfect Turkish governor and gentleman: he sent presents to the harems of his patrons at the Porte; he furnished the public Miri with the regular taxes of his district; he was indulgent to his wives, humane to his slaves, affectionate to his children, and generous to his soldiers; no stricter observer of the ramazan; no more regular performer of the five prayers; and none, save the unfortunate peasantry he governed, and the rayahs he oppressed, had reason to speak of his injustice or rapacity; and what respectable ear ever hearkened to the complaint of the husbandman

in Turkey? In short, no ruler had a more respectable reputation than the Aga of Bournarbashi, and no true believer slumbered away his life in the enjoyment of a more quiet conscience, constituted as such things are in Turkey, than Suleiman Aga.

CHAPTER XIII.

Sir, I praise the Lord for you, and so may my parishioners; for their sons are well tutored by you.

Love's Labour Lost.

In due time, the two little gentlemen, Yussuf and Mourad, were sent to school; they had arrived at that age when the beauty and grace of boyhood are lost in the mawkish diffidence and awkwardness of the stripling state. Up to this period the affection of Turkish parents for their lovely offspring is unbounded. They accustom them to every species of indulgence; they impose no restraint on their young and innocent desires. Yussuf and his brother were, if possible, more indulged, and consequently sooner spoiled than the children of their neighbours. They were lovely little fellows; their

beautiful tresses fell in ringlets over their shoulders; their flowing antars were of the richest cloth of gold, from the Aleppo loom. The variety of colours in the jebbi and sherwall vied with those of the rainbow, and were mingled with no vulgar taste. In the harem, each little favourite was daily decked out in all the finery of the fair houries of the Aga. The gems of Samarcand were lavished on the toilet of children; the pearls of Kolsoum were purchased for the playthings of infants; but when they grew a little older, their reign was over in the harem; they were regularly sent to the day-school of Bournarbashi, whose miserable mosques, unlike those of the capital, had no Medresses, or public college, attached to them.

A poor blind Muezzin was the pedagogue who followed the various occupations of calling the faithful to prayers five times a day; of medicating wounds, even where Machaon plied "his art divine;" and of flogging the knowledge of the true Prophet, and the mercy of the true God, into the souls of the little Moslems, through the medium of their skins. No

urchin is flagellated without the prefatory Bismillah—"In the name of the most merciful God." The schoolmaster was little abroad in the village of Bournarbashi; being blind, the worthy Muezzin stayed as much at home as his avocations would permit. His academy was an open shop in the bazaar, where the future philosophers of Troy were disposed on a shop-board to the inspection of passengers, like the inanimate commodities of the surrounding stalls. There the two sons of the Aga of Bournarbashi were seen squatted on a mat, with a crowd of little greasy urchins, the sons of the village barbers, tailors, and shoemakers, jumbled together without any distinction in a circle round their blind instructor. The Muezzin's son taught the more insignificant parts of education: to wit, reading and writing. But the higher accomplishments, of repeating the Koran, of learning the namez, of recollecting the ninety-nine names of God, these leading branches of erudition the blind old man wisely entrusted to no other teacher. The flogging department, too, he reserved to himself; his extraordinary tact enabled him to wield the

ferula with unerring accuracy. He knew every gradation of pain by the peculiar cry of the truant; and the painful necessity of castigating children, which is so thorough a gratification to the choler of the pedagogues of all countries, gratified his ear. The attention of the unwary passenger, as he passed the academic stall, never failed to be arrested by the deafening hum of the school-hive. There sat the sons of Islam, squatted on a dirty mat, rocking their bodies to and fro; their eyes fixed on a piece of painted deal, which served for a slate, held between their knees, and on which was traced perhaps a chapter of the Koran, to be learned by rote. Every student read his task aloud, in a monotonous sing-song tone; and, amidst the Babel of confused sounds which overwhelmed the tympanum, how it was possible for the distracted pedagogue to understand the instruction he intended to convey, and which it appeared impossible to hear, it was very difficult to conceive.

The entire education both of poor and rich was the same; all were instructed in reading the Koran, in transcribing it on the board, and in

learning it by heart; in practising the most approved postures of praying, and methods of ablution, of sitting on one's heels and covering the tips of the fingers in the presence of a superior, of immerging only the first joint of the fore-finger and thumb like gentlemen into a dish of pilau, or any other fashionable viand.

Having passed a couple of years at this elementary school, a learned Effendi of Stamboul, who was exiled for some political offence, found a shelter under the roof of his old friend, the Aga of Bournarbashi. He endeavoured to evince his gratitude to his benefactor, by perfecting the education of his sons in the learning which is only taught in the colleges of the capital. This consisted in a thorough knowledge of the Turkish grammar; a smattering of the Arabic and Persian tongues; an acquaintance with the principal Oriental poets, and the possession of an elegant style of writing; the merit of which consists in cramming the largest number of quotations from the Arabic and Persian poets into the smallest given space in all official letters and diplomatic documents. The young gentlemen were, likewise, taught to

read the Koran in the original Koreish; which, like the Coptic, is still read, but no longer understood. They were initiated into the mysteries of Turkish theology, concerning the incomprehensible title of "the chapters of the perspicuous book" the Koran: on which subject alone, nine hundred excellent commentaries have been written, and ought to be read by every gentleman who aspires to the name of Effendi, or qualifies himself for the profession of a lawyer, a divine, or a Ulema, who is both. But the one great doctrine of Islam, was never lost sight of in the attainment of Turkish knowledge; it was the Alpha and Omega of all instruction, the object and the end of all erudition: namely, the sacred necessity of promoting the glory of God on earth, and the honour of his Apostle on high, by exterminating the common enemy of both, the unbeliever. This pious doctrine was instilled into their infant minds, it grew with their growth, it acquired stability with their strength; and the first manifestation of the premature ambition of their young hearts, which elicited a parental chuckle at the developement

of manly courage, was the longing they expressed to steep their little swords in the blood of the abominable giaours. Poor little Mourad's eye glistened with delight when Suleiman would tell him he should one day be a soldier, and slay all the Roumi in the country; while Master Yussuf was consoled with the higher promise of being an Aga of a large village. The heart of the little Moslem was made to dance with joy at the prospect of levying contributions on his vassals, and inflicting avanias on his rayahs. The young gentleman dreamt of realizing his golden dreams, before he was twelve years old. Already he began to extract paras from the pockets of the poor little Greeks in the neighbourhood, and to trounce them soundly, when they ventured to complain. On one occasion, a young rayah, more sturdy than his companions, resisted the violence of his young lord, the Effendi. Fatal resistance!—the little tyrant drew his handjar,—no child of distinction goes abroad unarmed,—and laid open the shoulder of the poor Greek boy. Mourad, to his shame be it spoken, was abetting his brother in his unjust demand; but even a

Turkish education had not extinguished all the generous feelings of youth: the instant he witnessed the cruel blow, he flew on his cowardly companion, wrested the bloody weapon from his hand, and smashing the blade across his knee, he flung the fragments in his brother's face. Yussuf vowed vengeance for the insult, but he dared not lift his hand to execute his threat: he wanted not the will, he possessed sufficient strength, but Mourad had an ascendancy over his spirits, which he tacitly acknowledged without knowing why or wherefore, and he hated his brother in his heart for the advantage. Mourad stood bolt up before him, ready to tear his turban into flitters, if he attempted to repeat an epithet, which he bestowed on him in his fury. "Call me not a Kafir, Yussuf," he exclaimed, "or the son of a Kafir, or by my father's beard, I 'll serve you worse than you even used that poor dog of a Christian."

"I did not call you Kafir," said Yussuf, "I called you a pessavink, a scoundrel, and you know you are one: what is it to you if I killed the giaour?"

"Not much," said Mourad, "but he 's not

even your own size, and he had no knife in his girdle, and therefore you were a spiritless dog to strike him."

Yussuf began muttering all the most approved invectives of the language, but he retreated as he elevated his voice; and Mourad, instead of noticing him, attended to the little howling Greek, whose arm was bleeding profusely, and round it he bound his own handkerchief, forgetting, in his zeal, that it was an embroidered one belonging to Yussuf's mother, which she valued highly. He gave the poor boy a handful of paras, and then thought himself privileged to abuse the obstinate rascal, as he called him, for daring to offer any resistance to a true believer.

"You were a rayah once yourself," said the boy sobbing, "and so were your father and mother too, and they would not like, if they were alive, to hear you call yourself a true believer."

Mourad would have given the little giaour a kick or two for his insolence, if it had not been for his wounded arm. As it was, he bestowed a few curses on his creed, and returned to the

khan. On his arrival, he was summoned to the presence of the Aga, to answer the complaint of master Yussuf. The latter had the advantage of a first statement and a bloody nose, from the violence of the blow of the broken blade. Mourad had nothing to oppose but a plain and artless story, and it carried the day even with the Aga of Bounarbashi.

"Yussuf," he said, "had no right to strike the rayah with his sword; it was for him to smite offending giaours; but Mourad was not blameless in openly espousing the quarrel of an infidel. It had been better if he had merely prevented the blow, and done nothing more." A stranger who had only witnessed the oppression of a Turkish governor might have marvelled at the justice of Suleiman's decision; but he must have been imperfectly acquainted with the Turkish character, if he imagined that the despot of Bounarbashi did not belong to a very numerous class of Turkish gentlemen, who are seldom if ever unnecessarily wanton in cruelty, and who never perpetrate an atrocity without what they deem a just and necessary cause. Suleiman more-

over was as just and impartial a governor of his family, as he was a rapacious ruler of his district. If he showed any favour to either of his children, it was towards his adopted son.

The father of the boy who had been hurt, had the folly to appear before the Aga with a complaint against his son; he got nothing for his pains but a torrent of abuse, and was even threatened with the bastinado for the insolence of his boy. He was minutely questioned about the conduct of Mourad; and in the course of the investigation the affair of the paras and the handkerchief transpired, and this circumstance, which Mourad had concealed, vexed the Aga more than all the rest. The Greek was glad to be permitted to retire unpunished; but Mourad was destined to receive the harshest rebuke he had yet heard from the Aga's lips.

"So you gave all your money to the infidel!" said Sulieman, in a haughty tone, "and the white handkerchief which you wore for a turban. The distinguishing honour of a Moslem's head, you thought of so little value as to make a present of it to a dog of a Christian.

You did not think it necessary to tell me you had given this to an infidel. Oh no! I begin to fear, in spite of all the pains I have taken with your education, that you are little better than a Kafir after all. Quit my sight! I 'll listen to no excuses."

The word Kafir vibrated on the ear of Mourad long after he left the apartment; and the memory of it thrilled through his proud heart for many a long month after his offence had been forgotten. He knew that his mother was a Greek, and that she was dead, but he was totally ignorant of her story. He sometimes doubted if Suleiman were his father, but duty and education taught him to revere his supposed parent, and to reverence the religion he had been brought up in the belief of. But why he should be stigmatized with the opprobrious epithet of Kafir, a name which is the abomination of the true believer and only given to the vilest of the Giaours, he could not imagine. The mysterious language of the women of the harem now daily caused him to question this real claim to the parental affections of the Aga. Most of those who knew the fate of Michelaki

were no longer in the khan, and those who remained and were acquainted with the truth were too wise to reveal their master's secret.

Some mystery, he eventually suspected, hung over his birth, but the nature of it he had no means of penetrating, and he thought, perhaps, it might be of little service to his fortunes to give himself the trouble of finding out the secret. His situation became, however, daily more irksome; he was continually embroiled in quarrels with his wily brother, for between them there was no feeling in common except that of deadly hate. The mother of Yussuf, too, looked upon Mourad with no friendly eye. In him she saw the rival of her son, and the favourite of his father; and she needed no better reason to take every occasion of prejudicing him in the affection of her husband, and ultimately, she hoped, of ruining him altogether in his esteem.

CHAPTER XIV.

The edge of the bower is filled with the light of Ahmed; among the plants, the fortunate tulips represent his companions. Come, O people of Mahomet, this is the season of merriment; be cheerful, be full of mirth, for the Spring passes soon away; it will not last.

MESIHI.

MOURAD felt keenly the misery of living under the roof of an unkind hostess. He had now arrived at that time of life when the ingenuous bosom is most alive to insult and impatient of injustice. The pompous ceremony had been already gone through which marks the entrance of the young Moslem into civil life: when he publicly professes the glorious faith of Islam, renounces the puerile occupations of boyhood, parts with his flowing locks, escapes from the thraldom of the harem, and is suffered

to swagger to the Café and the Mosque, bearded like a pard and accoutred like a bandit.

The sudden metamorphose of the long-haired youth into the bald and turbaned Turk is equivalent to the transition which took place in Ancient Rome, when the manly gown conferred the honour of maturity on the stripling, and the Capitol was the scene of the sublunary apotheosis which in later times is performed in a mosque. This universal Oriental ceremony, whose antiquity was of an ancient date in days of yore, perhaps before the Hebrews sanctioned the Egyptian custom by adoption, is still observed with all the splendour of Eastern magnificence.

Mourad and Yussuf were made responsible agents of civil life, and partakers in the promises of the law of Islam, the same day. It was a day of joy and feasting; the uncles and cousins of the women of the harem were suffered to pay a short visit to the relatives whom they had not seen for a year before. The Aga gave each wife a new piece of Damascene, each servant a new turban, each soldier an additional mess of rice, and each of his happy slaves a new pair of yellow papoushes.

The serfs of the Aga on the other hand, who cursed in their hearts the happy day, sent customary tokens of their love and loyalty to their master; and woe be to him who sent an insufficient present! Within the walls of the harem the ear-piercing cries of the joyous women were heard confounded with the wild melody of the Turkish lute and tambourine, not musical, but most melancholy. Indeed the same shrill howl serves a Moslem lady for the expression of the opposite ecstasies of joy and sorrow. The dancing girls were heard beating time with their little hands to "the faint exquisite music" of the lute, and the imagination of the ravished listeners was suffered to pourtray every languishing movement in the voluptuous mazes of the dance. Without, after the return from the mosque, festivities prevailed amongst all. The Aga feasted his friends on half a hundred dishes in succession, commencing with the dessert, and ending with the soup. Then adjourning to another apartment with the chosen few who were above the prejudices of the vulgar, and below the suspicion of sobriety, the Turkish refections of the Gods began. The rakee-

bottle, filled with the delectable spirits of Scio, the nectar of the Ottomans, was laid upon the table, but not before the pious guests washed their hands and beards, and turned to the East and prayed. "Wine," said Suleiman, "was wisely forbidden to the true believers; if we drank it in common, should we not be like the people of Franguestan? (perdition to their race!) but rakee, my sons, is not wine, therefore we may drink it."

"Undoubtedly wine is not spirits," cried every observer of the law. "Neither," continued Suleiman, emptying the bottle in a single round, "is wine in itself a bad thing; it is the intoxication which is bad. The Prophet (may his name be exalted!) never said, True believers, you must eat no grapes; no such thing. 'True believers,' said the Apostle, 'you must drink no wine,' that is to say, you must not become drunken like the giaours. The sin is in the quantity, not the quality of the liquor. The prohibition is then intended for the ignorant and the uneducated, but who is there here who would make himself a beast? no man."

"Min Allah!" exclaimed all. "God forbid! God forbid!" But one old man with a green turban, a descendant of the Prophet, who appeared already fuddled, protested strongly against the impropreity of getting drunk on wine, or, indeed, of tasting it at all. The Aga poured the last drop of the rakee into the glass of his scrupulous friend, and then produced a bottle of the forbidden juice of the permitted fruit, delicious old Cyprus, not quite so sweet as treacle, but almost as thick. The convivial party sat till morning, doing honour to the solemn occasion by discussing many bottles of wine, which none but Turkish stomachs could retain; and very many abstruse topics of discourse, which none but Turkish philosophers could handle with adequate absurdity. The two happy youths in the mean while were snoring for the first time outside the walls of the harem, dreaming of swords and pistols, horses and fine clothes; visits to Stamboul, and pilgrimages to Mecca; of harems on earth, and houries in Heaven; and all the other joys of that heaven upon earth, and of this earth in heaven

"But Mourad's visions were more terrestrial than otherwise. The image of a lovely maiden in the adjoining harem, with ringlets like the plumage of the raven, and eyes like those of the gazelle, with a form like the slender javelin, and a bosom like the calix of the white rose, full of beauty, and the receptacle of all sweetness, filled his imagination with that species of ecstasy, which is called love. But when he fancied he heard the object of his idolatry call him by the name of brother, he shuddered in his sleep; but suddenly a hideous gowl seemed to point its horid finger at a phantom, and to say, Behold your father! Many such dreams harassed the peace of poor Mourad, and often sent him from his bed more weary and wretched, than when he laid him down. The ties which bound him to the fair daughter of Suleiman, he long believed were those of nature, but the sentiment had grown into a passion, and the mystery in which his early history was involved had nurtured its seeds, and now he had to struggle with an attachment at which his soul revolted; for it sprang from the hebbat al calb, "the very

grain of the heart," and could no longer be mistaken. The words of the little Greek boy, which had given him so much offence, though spoken some years ago, were now frequently recalled. The opprobrious epithet of Kafir not unfrequently bestowed, and the strange innuendoes of the mother of Yussuf in moments of anger, were treasured in his bosom. Instead of being treated with the indifference he formerly manifested, they were now the all-absorbing subjects of his meditations, and were tortured into proofs of the invalidity of Suleiman's claims to his affections as his child. The father of the Greek boy, he imagined, must be acquainted with the secret, and he only awaited his return from the fleet the ensuing winter, "to pluck out the heart of his mystery" from the breast of the rayah, even if it were necessary with the sword.

CHAPTER XV.

When she comes forth, she eclipses the sun in splendour; she moves with the suppleness of the slender javelin.

EBN EL WARDI.

IN the harems of the middle classes of society, the unmarried sons have commonly access to the apartments of the women, so long as they remain under the paternal roof. They very often take their meals with them, as the dignity of the lord of the harem admits not of his eating with his wives or children; neither have they the privilege of being seated in his presence. Mourad had therefore the *entrée* of the harem, and every time he visited it, he left its sacred precincts with another unerring shaft in his bosom, shot from the deadly level of a soft black eye. Zuleika was the daughter of

Suleiman, by a Circassian slave, who, having been publicly manumitted before the Cadi, took her station among the free wives of the harem, and had the gratification of seeing her child possessed of all the privileges of a legal offspring. Zuleika was two years younger than Mourad; they were brought up together, and they quarrelled less than step-children commonly do; not that there was any great mutuality of minds manifested in the nursery, but as they grew up, there was some community of feeling perhaps produced by the circumstance of both children being equally obnoxious to the sovereign lady of the harem, the mother of Yussuf. She looked upon them as intruders, who had been smuggled into the favour of the Aga, expressly, as she believed, to interfere with the prospects of her son. Mourad and his little playmate had a common interest in defeating, as far as possible, the malevolence of the Queen-mother, by making Master Yussuf accountable for his own mischief, which he generally endeavoured to throw on the shoulders of his young companions. This was the first link of their union, and it would be needless to

trace every other which connected the chain of their affections till they arrived at a mature age, and the first fond hopes of their young hearts were bound together. Zuleika was now in her sixteenth year; in the language of the East, beautiful as the moon, and, like that pale planet, living on the light of her brother's countenance. The gorgeous and magnificent character of Circassian loveliness was displayed in her symmetrical form and splendid features. Her beautifully rounded limbs, the fulness of her languid eye, and the ripeness of her rosy lips, forming a contrast with the colour of her complexion, were the characteristic charms of a blooming Oriental girl, such as Titian might have painted, and Moore immortalized in verse. Her long hair fell in voluptuous profusion on her shoulders, from the silver gauze which went round the head, interwoven with her ringlets; while her flowing garments of spangled Damascene betrayed the talent of the *artiste*, who fashioned the vesture to the shape, which never suffered the constraint of a corsette; for such an implement of torture is unknown in Turkey. The pretty yellow slippered foot, and well-

turned ankle, in the hosiery of Nature, stole in and out like mice beneath the ample folds of those lower garments, which we seldom see exhibited in this country, except by ladies on the stage, and then in a very scanty form. Her majestic gait was common to all her countrywomen, on whom the toilet imposes no constraint, and whose movements are consequently easy and elegant, because they are natural, and very different from the constrained and artificial carriage of our European belles, the business of whose French posture-masters is to outrage Nature in every attitude and movement. The Turkish female costume is advantageous to a fine figure, and yet is so calculated to make the most of an indifferent one, that probably Zuleika would have done little honour to the skill of Madame le Roi in Paris, or even to the divine devices of Mrs. Bell, in St. James's Place. But although she might have been eclipsed in a ball-room by the blushing beauties of Franguestan, Zuleika was a lovely creature to see moving, like a little empress in the harem, or seated on a divan, in all the elegant indolence of a Turkish lady, "her

eyes full of sleep, and her heart full of passion," and beauty in perpetual repose on the voluptuous velvet of her cheek. If her person was larger for her years than that of a European girl, her figure was not less graceful, and the absence of the rose in her complexion, which sun or storm had never been permitted to visit too roughly, offended not the eye with the indication of constitutional robustness. In other climes the pallor of the female cheek is generally the painful evidence of impaired health, but in Zuleika's country, the delicate transparency of the unstained cheek is the natural complexion of the enshrined beauty of the harem, though softened perhaps not a little by the too frequent use of the bath. In large cities the premature decay of female beauty is to be mainly attributed to this cause; but in the village of Bournarbashi Zuleika's charms were in little danger of deterioration from the abuse of this indulgence of the ladies of the capital. There was no public bath nearer than the Dardanelles, and consequently there was less intrigue in the district than might otherwise have been. Zuleika was not only lovely to the eye, but sweet to

the sense; her disposition was all gentleness, and her affection was of a constant and noble nature. The little tyrant of the heart never fixed his throne on a more feminine bosom. She loved her brother with such fondness as became a sister; she was happy when she saw him smile, and dejected when she saw him sad: she soothed him when he was sick, and she wept when he got well and went abroad, and she knew not why, she only knew that Mourad was her brother, and that she loved him with her whole heart. Her own fair fingers embroidered his handkerchiefs; she gathered the hyacinths which dangled from his turban or were placed in his *ceinture*, (for Master Mourad was a fop.) She ornamented the cover of his Koran, and she prayed to the Prophet (for women have souls in Turkey) to make her dear Mourad a great soldier, and if it might be his will, a Pacha, if it were only of two tails. She blessed her stars for giving her such a brother, but of late she was only thankful for possessing such a friend, and sometimes even "wished that heaven had made her such a man," and had sanctioned their union before the Cadi. Mourad the

mean while was no longer the sprightly youth whose buoyant spirits gave laughter to his lip and animation to his eye; a settled gloom had for some weeks past overspread his features; and when Zuleika sought the knowledge of his sorrow, he assured her he was perfectly happy, but the faintness of the smile which was meant to allay her anxiety, sickened her heart with fear. Some terrible emotion she knew it must be, so suddenly to alter his looks, and to change the purple light of youth and health to the haggard hue of grief. Her faithful breast had hitherto been the depository of all his cares, and she now reproached him with the unkindness of withholding his confidence when he had most need of a friend to share his sorrows, whatever they might be. She conjured him by the memory of their once happy early days to give her a proof of his love by acquainting her with the grief which preyed upon his mind. She clasped him to her bosom, and besought him, if he was still her own dear Mourad, to tell her all, for she was prepared for every ill except the loss of his affection.

The tears glistened on the cold white marble

of her cheek as she pressed him to reveal the cause of his distress. Mourad was not proof against the contagion of her tears and the soothing influence of her sympathy, for he wept like a child; they were the first tears of manhood, and they were wrung from his heart.

"I am still, sweet Zuleika," he exclaimed, "your own dear Mourad. The memory of our early days is not forgotten, but a terrible discovery which I have lately made, and which you would drag from me, has already lost me a sister, and the disclosure of every horror which now overwhelms my imagination, perhaps may deprive me of the love of that being who is now bound to me by another and a dearer tie, who is nearer to my heart than the veins which pervade my breast. Since you will know the only secret which I have hitherto kept from you, listen to me, Zuleika, with a patient ear; for I have to speak of horrors, unheard of horrors, and coupled with a name which I once pronounced with reverence. You already marvel at my words, and well you may, but how will your gentle spirit bear the history which follows, of villainy, remorselessness, and unprecedented

villainy, of whose guilt, my Zuleika, murder is not the worst? You shudder at the sound; 'tis better," continued Mourad, "I do not proceed; indeed you had better press me no farther; it is too melancholy a story."

"Mourad," cried the girl, in all the agonies of suspense, "I will hear it all; I charge you, by your soul, to speak the entire truth, for it cannot be so fatal as my fears, or so intolerable as my suspense."

"Sooner or later you must know my secret," said Mourad, "and I would not have you receive it from the lips of my enemies. Come closer to me, Zuleika; you shall know the dreadful story, but promise me never to give utterance to a word which you may this day hear."

CHAPTER XVI.

——They shake their heads
And whisper one another in the ear;
And he that speaks doth gripe the hearer's wrist;
Whilst he that hears, makes fearful action,
With wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes.
KING JOHN.

"YOU have heard, Zuleika, that my mother was a Greek, and that she died during my infancy. In Suleiman, my supposed father, you are aware I found an indulgent parent, whose kindness was some compensation for the ill-treatment I received from the mother of Yussuf. The mysterious expressions she frequently dropped in her anger, concerning my origin, first aroused my suspicions, and subsequently circumstances only tended to confirm them. I had then only one strong motive, to ascertain

the truth. You know that your love was more essential to my being, than the vital air, for I breathed only 'the sweetness of that bower which had made the air so fragrant, that the dew, before it fell, was converted into rose water.' You will therefore wonder not at the interest which entered into the secret inquiry I set on foot in order to ascertain the secret of my origin.

"I discovered by accident that a rayah of the village, who was then absent, knew more of my history than he was willing to communicate. I waited his return with no little anxiety; at length, I heard of his arrival, and armed with my yatican, I proceeded to his dwelling, resolved to rake out the mystery of my birth by any means, fair or foul, and in the event of my failure, of burying the secret in the bosom of the infidel for ever. I found him alone; I questioned him about the story of Emineh, for such was the name of my poor mother; but a shake of the head and a shrug of the shoulder were the only reply I could extract. I addressed myself to his avarice, I appealed to his pity, but no argument could induce him to meddle

in the affairs, as he called him, of my father the Aga, whose anger, he said, was more dreadful than the rage of the lion. 'Then,' I exclaimed, drawing my bright sword, 'I must be the son of Suleiman, for my rage is no less deadly. Owe then your death, accursed infidel,' I cried, 'to your own obstinacy,' and raising my scimitar, I was in the act of cleaving him to the earth, when he threw himself at my feet, and supplicated to be heard. While the brightness of my sword was still gleaming in his eyes, he conjured me, by the name of my honoured father, to deliver him not up to the vengeance of the Aga. (Shrink not from my side, my Zuleika, for betraying the secret of his guilt.) The saddest story that ever a son heard, he told me. I listened without a groan; my soul was transfixed; I wept not, moved not, called no curses on the villain's head. The very giaour took compassion on my anguish; he placed me on the divan, and put a cup of water to my lips. I overcame the weakness of my heart, I breathed again, I felt the cold sweat standing on my forehead. I heard the wretched comfort of the infidel ring-

ing in my ears. I saw him weep when he pointed out the desolate walls where I drew the first breath of life, and where my unhappy parents saw many days of misery. Oh! Zuleika, 'twas no common cause of sorrow which subdued my manhood, in the presence of a dog, a Christian. 'Twas no ordinary grief which played the weak woman with my proud heart, and made the hot blood run cold, and trickle like snow-drops through my veins. In that desolate abode which stood before me, my parents lived exiled from the capital, where they but lately ranked with the exalted of their people. My mother, my poor heart-broken mother, was beautiful and virtuous, my Zuleika, as thou art; and her voice, they tell me, was sweet as the musical accents of the angel Israfel, the most melodious of the creatures of God. Fallen as she was from the splendour of her former state, she still was happy; for she had yet a fond husband for a blessing, and an only child, loved even to distraction, for her earthly consolation. Weep not, my girl; the dew of pity can only moisten the surface of the rank grave, but tears of blood

must find their way to the cold hearts which fester underneath. Talk not to me of patience, tell me not of pity, I know neither; till the red finger of revenge shall write the epitaph of my murdered parents. Oh, Zuleika! if you shudder now, how will your heart bleed when I tell you the sad sequel. My angelic mother seldom went abroad, but the fame of her beauty had already reached these accursed walls, and Eblis himself —for no other but the author of all iniquity could have suggested such mischief—put his infernal lust into the bosom of a villain, and afforded the long-wished-for opportunity of beholding the intended victim. Yes, Zuleika, the blood-shot eye of infuriated lust glared on the modest matron, and gloated on her beauty, even while the innocent baby was smiling on her breast. He took advantage of the authority of tyranny to tear the husband from the arms of his wife. My wretched mother was forced from her humble dwelling to become an inmate of the khan, a hostage for the faith of her absent husband. No sooner was she in the power of this villain, than he pressed his unholy suit—the lightning of Heaven scathe his

head!—he breathed his polluted vows into the ears of virtue—holy Prophet, give patience to my heart!—he laid his sweating palm on her pure cheek—every torment of the seven hells distract him!—he struggled to poison her sweet breath with his rank kisses—oh, heaven! was there no vengeance overhead! He held her trembling hands while he pressed his filthy beard to her white bosom; but, thank God, she had strength to dash the monster at her feet, though, unluckily, she had no dagger to plunge into his heart. Oh! you may well tremble, Zuleika; your hair may well stir with horror, your flesh may well creep at the recital. My poor mother was left alone, exhausted with terror and fatigue; she would have attempted her escape, but her intentions were foreseen and frustrated. She suffered no farther indignities for some days; not that the wretch relented in his wickedness. Oh, no! he had formed the diabolical scheme of depriving the mother of her child for the accomplishment of his infernal purposes. He carried his plans into effect. The child was stolen, and the unfortunate Emineh sunk under the desolation,—she went

mad with misery. The young, the beautiful, the chaste Emineh, became a woe-begone melancholy maniac; looking with horror on her infant, who was now restored to her sight, but lost to her affections, which reason no longer guided. Young as you were at the period of her abode in this accursed mansion, you must remember that poor spectre of beauty sitting in melancholy silence the live-long day, in the corner of the divan, leaning her wan cheek on her emaciated hand, and fixing her vacant gaze on the withered flowers which were always strewed around her, which none were suffered to remove or to replace with fresh ones. You cannot have forgotten the poor maniac, whose sorrows touched even the flinty bosom of the murderer of her mind. She was my mother, Zuleika; every one felt for the poor creature, save one, and that daughter of the Shitan was the monster who gave Yussuf birth,—the ashes of a mother's hopes be scattered on her head! She was the immediate cause of the dreadful catastrophe which followed. The wretched Emineh fled from the khan; part of her attire was found on the banks of the river, where

probably she ended her miserable life. Yes, probably, Zuleika, for her remains were never found, and some even pretended that a maniac was seen wandering about the great cemetery of Stamboul, whose woe-begone features bore some resemblance to the once beautiful lineaments of my angelic mother. What miserable son ever owed such a debt of vengeance! what amount of injury ever made so great a virtue of revenge! Four years had passed away since the husband of Emineh had been torn away from his family; and when at length he fled from his servitude, and was returning, as he hoped, to press his beloved wife to his bosom, to hold his infant on his knee, and to listen with delight to its little innocent prattle, his hopes were blasted all at once. He received the intelligence that he had no home; the abode that was such had been robbed of its inmates, the ashes were cold upon his hearth, and the grass had grown before his threshold. The horrid particulars were detailed, but the fate of Emineh was still left in doubt. The first impulse of his madness was to return to the village, to rush into the pre-

sence of the destroyer of his peace, and to demand his wife and child. But his prudent friends restrained him from so wild an act, and persuaded him to abide where he was, in order to purchase justice from the superior of the Aga, the Governor of the Dardanelles.

"He consented to remain for a few days, but the wily agent of his enemy was dispatched to frustrate his intentions, and eventually my poor father was once more consigned to slavery, and only after two long years of suffering was set at liberty. On his arrival at a neighbouring village, the villain Achmet got intelligence of the circumstance; he was commissioned by his master to induce my father to return to the village, and to promise him the immediate possession of his lost happiness. The deceiver came, 'his feet were clothed with the cunning of the fox, and his tongue was steeped in the honey of the bee;' and in an evil hour his perfidy prevailed.

"Fear not, Zuleika; if I grasped my sword, it was only the involuntary movement of subdued revenge. My ill-starred parent returned to Bournarbashi, he was presented to the vil-

lain who had wronged him mortally; he smiled at his approach, but it was the smile of perfidy, which tainted the wholesome air about the lying lip it wreathed. He welcomed his victim with fatal civilities, while murder was lurking in his thoughts. He pressed him to eat and drink beneath his roof. What man could fear to do so, even in the dwelling of his mortal foe, when the rites of hospitality were proffered and accepted, when the sacred morsel of bread and salt was eaten, and the blessing of Heaven invoked on the banquet? Oh! Zuleika, the religion of the heart was wanting, the sanctity of hospitality was unheeded, the faith that was due to the guest was forgotten. The poisoned cup was in readiness, and was offered to my father; he rejected it at first, but a second time was it presented; he drank it, and in a few hours he was a corpse. Ask not the name of his murderer, my Zuleika. The horrid story was never meant for woman's ear; but since you have torn it from my heart, hide it within your pitying bosom, if you still love so wretched a being as I am."

Mourad rushed out of the room as he spoke

these words, leaving the sad girl to ponder on the melancholy tale she had just heard.

"Well, he does best," she exclaimed: "perhaps it were better I should never hear the name my beloved Mourad curses. Merciful God! forbid it should be that which both were taught to bless! Oh no, it cannot be; but whosoever owns its ignominy, that of my beloved brother, my more than brother, is written in my breast, and shame or sorrow shall never wipe it out."

Poor Zuleika soon found out that Leileh, the beautiful mistress of Eastern romance, never loved the gallant youth Megnoun with greater ardour, and that the affection of all the sisters in the universe could not make up the amount of her fondness for him who ceased to be called her brother. Zuleika loved as if misfortune made the increment of passion, as if the increase of affection grew with every difficulty which arose. She knew that she was adored, but she knew also the depth of the deadly passion which swayed the heart of Mourad, and that no motive human or divine was strong enough to control the vengeance which he deemed a

debt to nature, and a duty dictated even by the law of the Holy Prophet. She trembled at the fatal issue of his anger, and she prayed to the Apostle that none but Achmet might fall within its dreadful vortex.

CHAPTER XVII.

You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair, and choose as true,
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss.

The Merchant of Venice.

THINGS went on as usual in the khan for some months after Mourad's discovery of his parent's history. Zuleika began to hope that time had softened the sorrow of her lover, and subdued the fury of his rage. But although he avoided the subject of his wrongs, as she hoped, to banish their memory from his heart, the rosy hue of health returned not to his cheek. If he came to the harem, it was no longer the light step of joyous youth which bounded on the

stairs. If he sought the plain, it was no longer the bright eye of careless boyhood that glistened at the sight of the djereed. Suleiman observed the alteration in his looks; he talked of sending for the village barber to find out his disorder, but Mourad assured him he had consulted an itinerant dervish of good repute in healing inward aches, and he gave him a charm to wear over his breast, which he trusted would make him well.

"Inshallah!" said Suleiman, "if it please Heaven, you will get well before the festive day of your sister's wedding."

"Surely not Zuleika's wedding, Sire!" exclaimed Mourad in a tone of astonishment he could not suppress.

"And why not, boy!" replied Suleiman; "is she not of an age to make a good man happy? and what better Moslem could a woman wish for than our good friend Achmet, my former servant, but now the wealthy comptroller of the customs of Canea?"

"'Tis very true, Sire," answered Mourad, "Achmet is, indeed, a Lokman in wisdom, and withal a rich man. 'Tis true, he is not very

young, but not above five-and-thirty summers older than my sister, but he will be the more prudent. I almost fancy I behold Aniran, the genius of wedlock, presiding over their nuptials!"

"'Tis a good word, boy!" cried Suleiman; "and as you have more influence over your sister than Yussuf possesses, you had better acquaint her with her happiness, and convince her of it if she be fool enough not to perceive it. This letter of Achmet's tells me business will carry him to the Dardanelles, and therefore he may pass this way. These twenty cantars of the far-famed soap of Canea, these twelve good jars of olive oil, are the presents of my worthy friend; and every year I may expect the same. On his return to Canea, I shall send his lucky bride, accompanied by three women of the harem and yourself, by the first vessel. Fours years ago, he was worth one hundred purses; he then lent me the fourth part of his fortune, and since that time Heaven has prospered all his undertakings."

"The truly good, Sire," said Mourad, "are always prosperous, therefore Achmet is

so; 'tis only the faithless and the vile on whom Heaven never smiles, therefore Achmet has nought to fear from fortune."

Suleiman fixed his penetrating eye on Mourad, as if he would have read the thoughts that were written in his heart; but Mourad's observation was so artlessly expressed, and so naturally suggested, that he evinced no farther uneasiness, or displeasure, than by bidding him in a somewhat louder tone than usual, execute his commands, and see that his sister knew how to estimate her happiness.

The family of Suleiman at this period was the subject of one of those scherzi of destiny, which is called at the *écarté*-tables a vein of luck, when a fortunate individual is permitted to retain the cards a dozen times *de suite*. In the dispensations of fortune, fate, or providence, the children of all countries in every time have had occasion to wonder at the strange succession of similar events which have visited families all at once with a multiplicity of deaths or marriages, where the angel of the grave had not hovered over the house for many a long year, and the genius of wedlock had not

smiled on a single rite for many lustrums. Misfortunes, however it may be, have certainly no tendency to come single, and blessings are not wont to rain without falling in an even down-pour. Ere the preliminaries of Zuleika's marriage were settled, another matrimonial treaty was on the tapis, and the high contracting parties were the Aga of the little village of Bournarbashi, on the part of his son Yussuf, and the chief executioner of Smyrna, on the part of his fair daughter Zarafat. So advantageous an alliance with the family of a great public functionary, Suleiman duly appreciated; and he resolved on postponing the happiness of his excellent friend Achmet, till such time as Yussuf's was secured. The greatness of the match was the theme of every tongue in the village of Bournarbashi, and the wonder of every woman, who extolled the cleverness of the youth in gaining the heart of the father in a little moon of time, which he lately spent in Smyrna, without an opportunity of even looking at the veil of his betrothed in her weekly promenade to the bath —without even having been able to throw a

hyacinth in her path, or to speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul with a single glance from a neighbouring lattice; or the transmission of a *billet-doux*, in the shape of a clove, or a bit of charcoal, through the medium of the female shampooers at the bath, who make more marriages on earth than in Christian climes are supposed to be made in heaven. Master Yussuf, in good truth, was not sorry to be spared this unnecessary trouble: he satisfied all his romantic curiosity concerning the charms of his intended with a single inquiry concerning her condition; and through the medium of a female relative in Smyrna, he received the pleasing intelligence that she was beautifully fat. But Yussuf informed himself well about the substance of her father, and of the probability of the son-in-law succeeding to the enviable station of chief executioner in the second city of the Empire; and the intelligence he received on this point was such as almost to turn his head, so glorious was the prospect of one day attaining an honourable career. Indeed, in one of his conferences with the executioner, in the midst of paying his addresses, he had the

imprudence to hint at the strength of his right hand, and, at the same time, to make a back-handed stroke downwards and inwards with his pipe-stick on the divan, the nature of which motion the worthy executioner perfectly understood; but he pardoned the indelicacy of the allusion, and was even somewhat tickled with the pleasing exhibition of the young man's ambition. Yussuf at length left Smyrna, with a letter for his father, containing the wished-for intelligence of the executioner's assent, and stipulating for the provision of a suitable establishment for Yussuf, and the means of furnishing his bride with an adequate present of clothes and trinkets, requiring no less a sum than a dozen purses. Every part of the executioner's proposal delighted the soul of Suleiman, except the advance of the twelve purses; but even this unpleasant clause was finally agreed to, and nothing remained but to establish his son in Smyrna, and to procure for him an appointment in the corps of Janissaries, which he doubted not he had sufficient interest to obtain. Applications were made to his influential friends in the capital, and no incon-

siderable portion of the soap and oil of poor Achmet accompanied the letters. Out of the number of applications, one proved successful. Yussuf got the post of a subaltern, whose head was at that moment ornamenting the porch of the governor's palace in Smyrna. The ancient law, restricting Janissaries from marrying, was still in existence, but little observed by the officers of the corps. The young Janissary, accompanied by his father, set out for Smyrna. Mourad was to have gone with them, but an unseasonable attack of illness prevented him the pleasure of attending the nuptial party. He was condemned to a week's confinement, with no other society to wile away the tedious hours but that of his betrothed sister. Suleiman and his son, in the mean time, arrived in Smyrna, and were received with distinguished honours by the father of Zarafat. As Yussuf was entering the porch, he received the first token of invisible affection, in the tangible form of a little ball of twisted silk, thrown from the lattice window of the harem.

The executioner rose at the entrance of the Aga, and gave him repeated welcomes. How

is it with our honoured friend? is he, and his brothers, and his uncles, and his sons, all well? his noble house, his stud, his flocks and his herds, are they all well and thriving?

Suleiman thanked Heaven and his host all were well, and in turn salaamed him with the same polite enquiries, albeit the worthy executioner had but a single horse, and no cows nor sheep at all. Yussuf made the respectful obeisance becoming his position in the family; he stooped and kissed the executioner's hand, and only took a seat when both fathers repeated thrice the kind command to sit down. The painfully respectful posture of an inferior, of course, was Yussuf's; he sat bolt upright on his heels, covering the tips of his fingers with exceeding modesty, and affording the numerous young attendants of the high headsman an admirable lesson in genteel behaviour. After half a dozen preliminary pipes, the servants being dismissed, the important subject was opened by Suleiman, and the costly presents of Yussuf were given to the bride, and accepted, and that day week was settled for the nuptials. The visitors took their leave, scattering paras

among the domesties as they passed, but not daring to look even at the latticed windows where the ladies of the harem were endangering their necks to have a peep at the young gallant, who walked through the court like one conscious of enviable observation, swinging his arms with all the grace of a Stamboul exquisite, waddling as he went along, and flinging his jebbee from side to side, with all the awe-inspiring elegance of a grandee in the Christian quarter of the Capital. Many a Mashallah was ejaculated by lovely lips, as Yussuf swaggered past the window of the harem: such exclamations as, "How wonderful is God! how beautiful a young man! how handsome a turban! how merciful is Heaven!" and others equally relevant, were breathed that morning; and many an envious tongue congratulated Zarafat on getting such a tall and proper man for her Lord.

The following week was occupied in setting up master Yussuf in the world, and this was done with so trifling an outlay as might astonish the family economists of Franguestan. A young man was to commence his career with a

handful of sequins, to furnish a house, to maintain a harem, to beget a house full of little Moslems, not having the fear of Malthus before his eyes, to feed them too from hand to mouth without any other certain income than a paltry salary of three or four piastres a day; and was in all probability to continue to make a respectable figure in the world without any other available resource than public peculation and private extortion. The furnishing the establishment was a trifling expense. On the occasion of a marriage, he must be a friendless man who cannot count on half the *materiel* of the household in presents. One kinsman sent Yussuf a Persian carpet, another a pipe, a third a Venetian looking-glass, a fourth the furniture for a divan, and so on even to the battery of the kitchen, till nothing was left to purchase but what the bazaar of second-hand commodities without much difficulty supplied. Every thing being completed in the establishment, the happy youth and the uncle of the still happier maiden repaired to the public office of the Cadi, and there signed the marriage articles, which contract completed the ceremony, and made Yus-

suf and Zarafat a married couple. The friends and kinsman of the bridegroom accompanied him to his house, where they feasted till midnight on pilau and kibab, and were refreshed with coffee and sherbet; while the blushing bride was conducted to the bath and anointed with several varieties of perfumed unguents. Led back with due solemnity to the paternal mansion, the matrons of the harem admonished her inexperience with suitable advice, touching obedience to her lord, whose foot-stool was to be her head, and whose throne was to be her heart. Such excellent counsel could not fail to make a deep impression, more especially as the last of her maiden slumbers were curtailed for such seasonable instruction. At the dawn, every officious hand in the harem was employed at the toilet of the bride. The surmeh was lavished on her eye-lids to give additional languor to her glances; the henna was liberally bestowed on her hands, to give blushes even to her fingers' ends. All the finery of her wardrobe was in requisition, and all the colours of the rainbow were displayed in her attire. Her silk gauze under-dress fell

gracefully over her pink Damascene drawers, whose ample folds and border of gold brocade most enviously concealed her instep, and almost hid her embroidered slippers decorated with pearls. Her vest, or antery of rose-coloured silk, showed the beauty of her shape, to which it closely fitted, except where the wide sleeves disclosed her fair arm, ornamented with numerous bracelets. The finest gauze of India concealed, or rather covered her fair bosom, over which several rows of the beautiful gold chains for which the artisans of Smyrna are so famed, hung down in various lengths. The caftan, or pelisse of blue silk, fitted close to the figure, but open in front, fell over the ankles; a richly worked *ceinture*, studded with pearls, emeralds and rubies, went round the waist, while the murlin, or outer veil, and the amsak over the features, completed the costume.

The coiffure of the bride might have been considered elegant in any country in Europe. A pink handkerchief of china crape, brocaded with leaves of gold and silver, was interwoven with her tresses; behind, her long hair flowed in innumerable tresses over her shoulders, fastened

at the extremities with little knobs of gold. In front there was no lack of diamonds, and the richest gems, disposed with no mean taste. In short, the bride was the admiration of all the men, and the envy of all the women. Every lady was on tiptoe at the lattice looking for the cavalcade for the last hour, and the poor bride's heart was panting with emotions which, at that moment at least, no young damsel might have envied her. At length a troop of horse was heard trampling in the street, and in a few minutes Yussuf was seen at the head of his kinsmen, sumptuously attired, holding his sword in his right hand, while he demanded his bride in a loud voice, thus manifesting his claim to the title of her protector and husband. The father of the bride received his son-in-law at the threshold, the latter exclaiming, "This is the day of true joy;" to which the executioner replied, "Great and lasting be thy joy!" In the lower apartments the bridegroom and his friends were hospitably entertained for some hours. The bride then descended with a host of female attendants decently veiled, to hide their charms from the eyes of the profane. The bridegroom

again mounted his charger and led the cavalcade; then followed his troop of friends; the female *cortège* came next, the bride walking under a gorgeous canopy, the women in the rear waving their white handkerchiefs, and emitting from time to time a thrilling cry of joy. A band of music followed next, and a merry-andrew completed the procession, whose antics served to draw off the attention of the rabble from the bride. Arrived at the bridegroom's house, Yussuf received his spouse, and seizing on her fair hand for the first time, he conducted her to the door of the harem, encouraging the trembler with all his eloquence as he went along, and, having consigned her to the women's care, he returned to his friends who were below stairs. There he remained with his joyous kinsmen till midnight, not suffered to approach the door of the harem the whole day long, where the blooming Zarafat was enjoying the splendid misery of hymeneal pomp, seated immoveable as a statue, and no less silent, under a canopy of state, with downcast glance of exceeding modesty, and still veiled, lest a ray of beauty should escape ere he to whom the light

of her countenance belonged should remove the invidious gauze; till that moment when he should turn away his head to avoid the dazzling lustre of her eyes, and should only look again at the encouraging intimation to approach without fear —"Guel jacquir benum—Come again, my guardian angel." Forbid it, ye chaste stars, that one of our perusers should linger at the threshold of the temple of Aniran, and seek to view the shrine of unveiled beauty! What eye could support the dazzling blaze of the divinity! What lion heart might not dread being scathed by the lightning of her offended majesty! Allah Illah! if the high-priest of Aniran, in the shape of a husband, and the guardian of the shrine, in the earthly semblance of a black eunuch, were to catch you at the door of the temple, better had it been you had pried into the secrets of Eleusinian rites and Isian mysteries! Within a little hour the bow-string would be twanging in your ears, and the scimitar gleaming on your astonished vision.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Arise, black Vengeance, from thy hollow cell!
Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne
To tyrannous hate! swell, bosom, with thy fraught,
For 'tis of aspics' tongues.

OTHELLO.

THE nuptials were no sooner celebrated, than Suleiman bade adieu to his son, giving him a great deal of advice about working himself into the favour of the executioner, whose place he might one day hope to fill. Yussuf's countenance brightened up at the prospect. "Would to Heaven, Sire," he exclaimed, "that an opportunity were afforded me of showing my dexterity to my worthy father-in-law. I have attended of late every public exhibition of justice, and I think there is much bungling, both in head and feet affairs. I mean, with the

assistance of the Prophet, to avoid such errors, and to rival the skill of the chief executioner himself, who is certainly a truly great man in cutting off heads; his coolness is only exceeded by his courtesy, so that even the rayahs think it a personal favour to fall under his hand: no unseemly flurry in his manner when the victim is dragged forth; no undignified violence in pushing him on his knees, when he seizes the tuft on his crown with his left hand; and repeats the bismillah in so gentle a voice, that the very culprit is involuntarily following his words, "In the name of the most merciful God!" when he just perceives the edge of the sword touching his bare neck, and then feels his head tumble into his lap in the twinkling of an eye. It would delight you, father, to witness the inimitable stroke, the obliquity of the gash, half cut, half thrust, and the rapidity of the motion; it is truly gratifying! But I cannot say so much for the happiness of his style in the employment of the bow-string; there is not sufficient energy in the turning of the stick behind, or the twisting of the cord, which admits of inconvenient struggles with

the half-strangled offender, till a good vigorous effort gives composure to the sufferer and relief to the executioner. Any interruption on the part of the culprit during the operation, you will confess, father, is very troublesome; it is annoying to have his black and swollen features turned towards you, streaked with livid crimson, and mingling into deeper leaden hues as life is ending; unless, indeed, it be one's deadly foe,—(no recollection of Mourad, it is to be hoped, suggested the exception,)—and then one cannot help it, if the staring blood-shot eyeballs of the expiring villain are glaring before one, if every convulsive twitch of his distorted features is witnessed, I won't say enjoyed."

"Min Allah!" exclaimed Suleiman, "no man can enjoy the last agonies even of his enemy; his death may be necessary to our happiness, but his groans should only be disregarded, not enjoyed, my son. It would be immoral and sinful, Yussuf, to think otherwise."

"I hope you will find Mourad better, Sire," said Yussuf, "on your return, and my sister in good health, and rejoicing in the prospect of her approaching happiness. Pray Heaven

you may!" he continued; "I love my brother Mourad dearly, and Zuleika, my amiable sister, still better. Heaven grant, Sire, you may find them both well and happy!" Suleiman gave an Amen to the sweet prayer, albeit he had some misgivings of its sincerity. He set out for his little seat of government with a damp upon his spirits, which he could not account for. He had seen his son happily settled in the world, he was on the point of providing his daughter with an affluent husband, and happiness, like the great mountain El Caf, which surrounds the habitable globe, seemed to hem in his prospects on every side. But still Suleiman approached his dwelling with a feeling of disquiet, a foreboding of some impending danger, suggested, perhaps, by Yussuf's insidious innuendoes, and Mourad's late observations on the merits of Achmet, his intended son-in-law. Perhaps the sight of Michelaki's desolate abode, as he approached his own noisy mansion, meddled with his peace, and recalled the recollections of the once beautiful Emineh, her grief, her madness, the arrival of the husband, the meeting in the khan,

and the murder. But the joyful faces of his servants, who thronged around him as he entered his dwelling, dispelled his gloom. Mourad was there to give him welcome; he still looked pale, but his spirits were improved; and his filial love never appeared more strongly marked, than on the present happy occasion Achmet, he was informed, had not yet been heard of; but Zuleika was well, and her duty had taught her to repress the repugnance she had at first evinced to the proposed union, and now she only longed to behold the day which was to bless her with so discreet a husband. This was as it should be; the melancholy of the morning was forgotten, and Suleiman was again a happy man. The intelligence too, that Mourad had been successful in collecting in his absence the imposts of the district, pleased him not a little, and that in a couple of days at farthest the remainder of the taxes should be gathered in, and the whole amount should be in immediate readiness for the receiver of the imperial miri. Mourad's assiduity was rewarded with suitable encomiums on his zeal for the interests of his father. But

to account for such a happy change in his activity, as well as in his health, it is necessary to recur to the period of Suleiman's departure for Smyrna with his son Yussuf. Since Mourad's discovery of the wrongs of his parents, every faculty of his soul was concentrated in one sentiment, whose headlong impulse was revenge. The voice of religion and education accorded with that of his ungovernable passions, and prompted him to the duty he owed to the spirits of the dead; and nothing but blood, he believed, could cancel the heavy debt. The means were constantly the subject of his thoughts, but no definite plan presented itself to his mind. Whether it should be accomplished by perfidy or open violence mattered little, so far as the duty he held sacred was concerned; but no principle of Turkish honour was violated in consulting his own safety in whatever bloody proceeding he embarked. At length he resolved on making Achmet his first victim, in such a manner as might "trammel up the consequences" in impenetrable mystery; and on seizing some future opportunity to commend the ingredients of the poisoned cup back to

the lips of Suleiman. His education had been too complete to clothe the suggestion with any other horror than the fear of failure. Had it been his destiny to have drawn the breath of life in the countries of Franguestan, he might have slain his mortal enemy in open day, and even have derived honour from the privileged assassination of his adversary. But Mourad was in Turkey, where honour is not satisfied with a public rencontre and a couple of simultaneous shots at any given distance. Moreover, the forgiveness of an injury was no tenet of his creed; on the contrary, in no part of the Koran was the Judaic origin of "the perspicuous book" more apparent than in that portion of it where blood for blood, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, are literally rendered, without the decency of concealing the plagiarism in another garb of words. Mourad's discovery of the religion of his parents was no check to his vengeance. He was too steadfast in the creed which chance had given him and education riveted into his heart, to be shaken in his belief even by the turpitude of Suleiman, to whom he owed the glorious name of Moslem.

He still continued to believe that as there was no God but one God, Mahomet must be his Prophet, but, at the same time, he became less convinced of the sanctity of the necessity of exterminating those who turned their faces to another keblé besides that of the holy city of Mecca. He now looked with more contempt than indignation on the unfortunate infidels who practised no ablution, repeated no namez, and fasted no ramazan; but he was no less a Moslem in petto. One circumstance, however, interfered with his deadly purpose of revenge, and that was his love for Zuléika. Ever since her father's departure, he had daily opportunities of conversing with her. The dreadful prospect of her approaching nuptials with Achmet, if possible, bound her closer to his heart, and the endearment was reciprocal, for on either side the passion was strengthened by despair. How often would she exclaim in her stolen interviews with Mourad, "Whose dog is he who would make these eyes his looking-glass to see his dotage? what grey-bearded son of a Shitan is he who would break into my Mourad's palace, and tear his image from my breast? I

warn him to beware of a distracted house; a woman's tongue is sharper than a sword, her heart is deeper than the Bosphorus, her hate is deadlier than either:" and then weeping over the impotency of her railing, she would wring her poor hands, and ask of Mourad if there was no resource, no hope left. In such moments it is not to be wondered at, if the memory of father, mother, injuries and all were forgotten, and nothing but the loss of his beloved Zuleika before his eyes. At length, a letter came from Achmet announcing his arrival at the Dardanelles, and his intention of visiting the khan in a few days. Mourad, who in the absence of Suleiman had charge of his correspondence, replied in the customary style of compliment befitting such an occasion. The epistle ran thus:—

"To our most venerated and highly esteemed friend, the wisest among the wise, the most learned among the learned, the discreet friend, the munificent companion, Achmet Effendi, a thousand salaams. The holy Prophet, whose name be glorified! shine propitiously on your footsteps to our khan, where your

place has long been empty, and your presence desired, but more especially by the unmentioned, whose sighs have struggled with the adverse winds which have delayed your arrival, and who pines to make the dust of your feet the surméh of her eyes, and to drink unseen the sweet sherbet of your discourse in the hidden place. May your meeting be propitious, and our alliance holy! How, indeed, can it be otherwise, when our friend is a Locman in wisdom, a Megnoun in his affections, and whose virtues make him a planet among stars? These we number not, because they are innumerable, and discretion becomes the lips of happiness, as the poet saith, 'The heart of the fool is in his mouth, but the tongue of the wise man is in his heart.' Therefore, come when you will, the threshold longs for the shadow of the friend of our house. This salutation comes from the son of Suleiman, in the absence of his honoured father; from Mourad, who is desirous of having the counsel of his enlightened friend (having no other now near him) concerning the discovery of a hidden treasure which has come to his knowledge this morning in the vicinity of the

ruins of Chiblak, Troy of Scander, known as yet to no earthly individual, save a Frank infidel, who has been digging for old stones in this neighbourhood, and who is willing to forego all claim to the gold if suffered to carry away, without molestation, some of the fragments of granite, with strange characters thereon, no doubt of sorcery. It is on this account that Mourad, the most faithful of his superior's friends, would be glad to-morrow night, three hours after the Mogreb, to meet Achmet on the spot beneath the ruins of the palace of Scander (the temple of the sun) alone; there to advise what had best be done with the infidel, and if it be expedient to carry away the treasure before the dawn. A small sack or two will be required to carry away the money. But one thing more is necessary, which need not be mentioned to the wise; and who would think of hinting at secrecy to one who knows that a silent tongue is a secret treasure?"

This epistle being dispatched, Mourad appeared a new man; the colour came to his cheek, his eye brightened, the smile of his happy youth played about his lips; he kissed the pale fore-

head of Zuleika, and bade her hope for happy days. "Cheer up, my angel," he cried; "the cloud which obscured our prospects shall be dispelled; another and a more distant view must meet our eyes. But God is great; the world is wide enough for two to walk together, whose souls are united, and Providence is larger than our footsteps, wherever they be imprinted. Allah Karim! we 'll leave old Achmet to laugh at his own beard; we 'll leave these accursed walls, my Zuleika. May they crumble into dust at our departure! I will find means to-morrow of getting rid of the importunities of Achmet for a little time at all events; and if Suleiman returns not the day following the disposal of our friend, a Greek caique, from the opposite island, shall be in readiness at midnight, under the Cape Janissary, to convey us to Tenedos. An Ionian shatoor, bound for Damietta, is in the roads, and once arrived in Egypt, the country of the Giaour Pacha Mohamed Ali, farewell to fear! We shall sleep, my Zuleika, on the carpet of security; peace shall be our pillow, and love, like the Bahr Nil, which overflows the land, shall inun-

date our hearts. Oh! we shall be so joyful, my angel, that even our enemies shall say, they are happier than Shireen and Kosrue—all true love is not buried with Megnoun, neither is beauty dead, because Leileh breathes not. The mother of Yussuf shall no longer be your tyrant—my father's murderer shall no longer be my benefactor. Curses on his favour! Though alone in the wide world, we shall be the world to one another, my Zuleika: the nightingale shall not warble his affections to the rose with more constant music than I shall whisper my true love's vows into your ears. The sycamore shall not joy more in the twining tendrils of the vine, than I shall delight in the gentle pressure of your arms. I shall gaze without fear on those beautiful stag eyes, swimming in love's own liquid lustre. I shall taste the sweetness of the cleft pomegranate on your lips; and these fingers shall lead the straying ringlets over your bosom, and teach them to flow there, like the silken web of a gossamer over the smooth white surface of the ostrich egg."

"We shall indeed be happy," cried Zuleika,

if we have the good fortune to escape without detection: whatever be my dear Mourad's fate, holy Prophet, let me share it! wherever he go, let it be my destiny to follow! In grief or gladness he has still been mine, and now in wealth or want, in the gardens of Stamboul, or in the desert of El Masr, let it be my lot to dwell with my lord, my beloved Mourad. But let no peril come to my father; promise me, Mourad, that a hair of his white beard shall not be harmed."

"Fear not for his life," replied Mourad; "I swear by the blessed camel of the Prophet, I have consented to receive the price of blood. Another victim's life shall expiate the crime; but Suleiman's substance must pay the debt, which nothing but his heart's gore could else have satisfied."

Zuleika was glad to secure her father's safety on any terms; she dreaded Mourad's vengeance, although he had never openly avowed the name of his father's murderer. Mourad took his leave, but not before he had enjoined the strictest secrecy and circumspection on the part of Zuleika.

CHAPTER XIX.

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damned;
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell;
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee.

HAMLET.

OUR hero had already provided the male attire of a Greek sailor for his mistress, and a similar costume for himself; these were deposited in a subterranean chamber in the ruins of Chiblak. Here also were concealed the riches of the rifled treasury of Suleiman; the precious gems, the gold and silver ornaments, the diamond-hafted dagger, and the magnificent amber mouth-pieces of the Aga. No small portion of the taxes which had been collected were expended in providing the caique and the shatoor; and

Zuleika was already informed of the signal which she might expect at midnight on the appointed evening. All the arrangements had been made, she was to ascend the terrace, and with the assistance of Mourad to gain the roof of the adjoining stables. From this low building the descent to the garden was easy enough, and the latter being only surrounded by a low wall, there was no formidable impediment to encounter. In short, every thing was settled, and the energy which marked the preparations, and the precaution which provided for every possible mischance, showed that other besides Turkish blood flowed in the veins and influenced the counsels of Mourad.

The night at length arrived, on which he was to meet Achmet amongst the ruins. He set out for the unfrequented rendezvous at sunset, some hours before the appointed time; his pistols were in his girdle, and his yatican slung over his shoulder as he went forth. The servants of the khan were informed he was going to pass the night in an adjoining village, in order to look after the Valonia produce of the place, without the

publicity a number of attendants would give to his visit. At night-fall he reached the solitary spot where he expected Achmet; he visited the subterranean chamber, which was situated beneath the ruins of the temple where he had deposited the spoil. Having struck a light, he proceeded to examine his plunder; the lamp gave but a miserable gleam in the gloomy chamber; he cast his eyes around, but what was his astonishment to find the effects he had secreted under a broken marble slab, strewed over the mouldering pavement, the costly dagger of Suleiman and the precious jewels of his harem scattered on the damp floor, as if some supernatural being, in contempt for the baubles of the earth, had dashed them here and there with reckless scorn! He seized on his pistol, looked with breathless haste in every corner, but no one was seen; again he examined his plunder; not one article had been removed; he found every thing he had left there; not even a paras had been taken from the money bags. The terrible suspicion flashed across his mind that his unhallowed steps had penetrated the precincts of a charnel, that he was stand-

ing in the receptacle of the ancient dead, and had probably disturbed the inhuman orgies of a goul. He called on the name of the blessed Prophet; three several times he repeated aloud the profession of faith; but at length, terrified at the sound of his own voice, he prayed in silence to be spared the sight of the horrible banquet, when he momentarily expected to see a hideous spectre rise and batten on some mangled corpse hitherto concealed. Overcome with terror, he sank on the steps which led to the chamber. The rain which only drizzled when he entered was now pouring down in torrents, and pattered on the marble pavement overhead; a gleam of lightning every now and then lit up the narrow entrance to the chamber, and then the loud peal of thunder followed and rumbled amidst the ruins, while the echoes were reverberated from one shattered column to another. The loud wind whistled in the interval, and the elements expended their fury on the ancient structures which had survived the tempests of five and twenty centuries, without hurling that awful night one solitary column or its nodding capital to the ground. It was

a terrific night; the horror of it still lives in the memory of the inhabitants of the surrounding villages. Trees were uprooted, houses unroofed, chimneys demolished, but the ruins of Chiblah resisted the storm, as if the slow hand of Time spurned at the rude fellowship of the tempest, and was jealous of its own destruction. Mourad listened to the terrible contention with no little alarm; all nature seemed leagued against his purpose; Heaven he believed had lent the storm for his especial warning, to convince him that robbery was not the vengeance which his murdered parents demanded at his hands. He rose from the ground, collected the scattered plunder, and resolved to carry it back to Bournarbashi. His heart, subdued with fear, attributed every gust of wind to divine wrath; every flash of lightning was an indication of offended justice, every clap of thunder the voice of divine retribution. The act which he had endeavoured to palm on his own heart as one of justifiable revenge, now presented itself to his view in all its real infamy. To shed the blood of his enemies as a duty, appeared more than ever sacred in his eyes; but to steal like a thief into the

hasnah of his victim, and rifle his treasures in the dark, smote his conscience to the quick. He had hardly formed the resolution of restoring the property of Suleiman, when he was startled by the noise of footsteps at the mouth of the entrance over-head; he hearkened with breathless anxiety to the sound. "Good heavens!" he said, "who can it be? Can it be Achmet already, and yet it wants one hour to the time? Holy Allah, grant it be him! But I fear it is no human being. Defend me, Heaven, from the spirits which walk the lonely places of the earth; if this be their infernal haunt, save me from their sight."

The same slow step continued to pace overhead, and now and then a sigh was heard as the being approached the entrance, and then a laugh wild and involuntary, which seemed like the very mockery of mirth. The cold sweat poured down the forehead of Mourad; he resolved to steal a glimpse at the object of his terror. He crept as gently as possible up the stairs; the rain had now ceased, and the moon was shining in all her Oriental splendour. The clouds had passed away, and the shadows

of the majestic pillars were projected over the pavement of the temple. Seated on a broken sarcophagus, a few yards in front of the subterranean chamber, Mourad beheld a female form, wrapped up in a white garment, which flowed on the ground and concealed every part of her person but her wild and haggard features. On these the moonlight had fallen, and had rendered the aspect of the appalling spectre but too visible. Mourad stood motionless with terror in the corner of the staircase, gazing on the frightful goul. He was no coward, but his knees knocked at every contortion of that dreadful countenance, his heart beat against his ribs at every sudden glance of those sunken eyes, the blood throbbed in his temples at every inarticulate sound that issued from those parched lips, the perspiration trickled from his forehead as he marked the waving motion of that shrivelled arm which she occasionally thrust forth, holding a living serpent in her hand, and suffering it to twine round her person. From time to time she threw a handful of earth in the air, and pointed with a threatening motion to the distant village of Bournarbashi.

At length, leaning her wan cheek on her skinny fingers, she burst forth into a wild song: the voice was broken, but not altogether devoid of melody. The following strange words were intelligible enough to the terrified listene r.

The watch-dog growled,
The night wind howled,
Not a lamp in the village was gleaming,
Nor a sound nor a breath
Broke the silence of death,
Save the jackal at intervals screaming.

The moon shed no light
On the earth that night,
But the lightning illumined the grave,
Where the murderer stood,
With the grumous blood
On the fingers which hollowed the cave.

I marked the red eye
Of a goul, stealing by,
As it gloated with horrible glare
On the blood-stained shroud,
While it mumbled aloud,
And then shrieked as it snuffed up the air.

'Twas ecstasy wild,
At discovering a child,
'Twas impatience to ravage its tomb,
To feast on the gore
Of the festering core,
And to suck the green corpse in the gloom.

But I lingered afar,
The foul banquet to mar,
Though I looked on the scene with delight,
And I laughed in my joy
At the corpse of the boy,
As he lay stiff and cold in my sight.

I heard the dull sound
Of the death-cold mound,
As it fell on the little one's breast;
I saw the earth piled
On the innocent child,
And I knew that his slumbers were blest.

How grateful I felt
When the murderer knelt
On the grave, the green sod to spread o'er;
I wept, for I ne'er
Met compassion elsewhere,
I never knew kindness before.

But from the fresh mound,
As he quitted the ground,
A vapour of crimson arose!
And curling on high,
As it pierced the blue sky,
I saw Heaven's portals unclose.

The firmament shook,
The Omnipotent spoke:
"Yes, vengeance is mine!" said the Lord;
And the thunderbolt fell,
I remember it well,
On the murderer's head at the word.

Mourad's emotions, while he listened to this lugubrious ditty, it would be difficult to describe; one moment he deemed the poor songster some wretched being deprived of reason, but endowed with superhuman knowledge, such as wander over the earth, expounding the mysteries of fate, and whose home is in the desolate places of the universe. Again, he believed he was gazing on a spirit of higher order than the gins and gouls of the reeking charnels. In short, he knew not what to think; but it was evident there was some horrible mystery in the words of the strange being, whether goul or gipsy, and if of the latter class, he fancied that as a fortune-teller, (and the exhibition of the serpent favoured the latter idea,) that the words of insanity had all the sanctity of inspiration, applied to him alone, and were meant as a reproof for the delay of vengeance. He summoned courage to issue from his hiding place, for the purpose of addressing the extraordinary being whose song had just ceased, but not before practising the precaution which all good Moslems adopt before they cross the heath or desert which is the haunt of gouls; he fired his

pistol in the air as he emerged from his concealment. It had the desired effect, for he heard an appalling shriek, and then beheld the white-robed figure flying before him with the velocity of the wind. He caught the last glimpse of it among the ruins, where it apparently sunk into the earth, for, on approaching the spot, no trace of any human being was to be seen.

CHAPTER XX.

Beware of thy enemy on the day thou see'st him smile, for the lion shows his eye-tooth when his rage is deadly. *The Cassida.*

As he returned to the temple, wearied with conjectures and exhausted with apprehension, he heard his own name distinctly uttered at no great distance, and immediately discovered Achmet's person. "Thank Heaven!" cried he, "for the sight of any human being, friend or foe, though ill adapted are these tottering limbs, these trembling hands, these unstrung nerves, for the encounter of one's enemy at such an hour."

"The peace of God be on your head, Mourad!" said Achmet, approaching him. "What a terrible night is this!"

"It is indeed," replied Mourad, "a bad night, a dreadful night for honest men to be abroad. You heard the signal shot that I fired?" he continued.

"I did," said Achmet, "but did not think it was very prudent to risk being heard by the watchful muezzins of the adjoining village. How is it with you, my good friend? we have almost forgotten to exchange salaams; such nights as these one might forget one's name. Holy Prophet! what a night to visit such a place! For all the treasures of King Suleiman I would not again face such a tempest, to be drenched in the rain, frozen with cold. Allah! Illah! 'twas madness to be abroad. But how little did I mind the tempest when, hiding behind these crumbling walls, I saw a terrible apparition, my friend, the sight of which nearly sunk me into the earth! I saw something white: by the beard of the blessed Prophet! I swear I saw it flying over the surface of these disjointed stones. It was a goul, an infernal goul, Mourad; for I saw the livid lips red with human blood; I saw the head of a true believer in its hand; I am sure I saw it. I trembled, I

confess, and my liver melted into water, but I'm certain it was the head of a Moslem; I knew it by the tuft of clotted hair."

"Stafar Allah!" exclaimed Mourad, "this is a foolish word; it was your fear, Achmet, which converted a flash of lightning into a goul, nothing more."

"Well," replied Achmet, wringing the water out of the sleeves of his cloak, "God knows all things! if it was not a goul, it was the lightning. Why should I be afraid? But what makes you tremble, Mourad? Your face is white, and your eyeballs roll. Have you seen any thing strange? Answer me by your mother's soul, by your father's beard, tell me the truth!"

"Who would not tremble," cried Mourad, "such a cold night as this? what eyes would not be scathed with such terrific lightning? We are not boys, Achmet; you know what brought us here. In yonder cave the treasure lies I wrote to you about. The Frank, (ill fortune to his race!) who discovered it, is now slumbering in the village, but he will be here at the dawn, and no time is to be lost."

The eyes of Achmet brightened up at the intelligence; he rubbed his frozen hands, he quickened his pace as he approached the temple. "Ah! Mourad," he exclaimed, "I always loved you, Wallah! dearly. I call God to witness how dearly. If I did not, would I have come out such a night as this, merely to serve you? Heaven forbid your father should ever hear a word of this: you know he is my friend, the crown of my head, the light of my eyes; but he loves money too much, God forgive him! If he were to know you found this treasure, which of right is yours, and may one day make a man of you, God knows the consequence. I always grieved that he loved Yussuf, that sneaking buffalo-headed fellow, who has no more brains than a water-melon, better than you. Every ounce of gold that you found by your wit would be lavished on his pet son, who hates you, Mourad, as he does the son of the Shitan himself. God is great! this must not be. I must take care of it for you; some little portion I will consent to take for the trouble I have had, for the fear which has dried up my heart this night; but a very little portion it

shall be. The bulk is yours; God has thrown it at your feet, and, Inshallah! it shall be yours in spite of Yussuf and his mother, who used to call you kafir, Mourad; you know how often she gave you that bad word. May the shadow of her face become less than a filbert's! Oh! Mourad! I always said you were born to be a great man, a planet among stars, a lamp among rushlights!"

"May your kindness never diminish, Achmet!" replied Mourad; "I am the least of the servants who desire to rub their foreheads in your footsteps. Your counsel is to me more precious than gold, and your friendship is better than riches. But I pray you enlighten my understanding on the subject of the infidel who acquainted me with his discovery; what is to be done with him, when he finds the treasure gone? Though we give him the old stones which his heart is set on, what is to prevent him disclosing the secret? My father will return in a day or two; the walls of Bournarbashi have ears; the people of the khan have tongues; the Aga has strong-armed ferashes, and the bastinadoes have sticks; I pray you

throw a little of the sunshine of wisdom on my poor brains: what is to be done with the infidel?"

Achmet had a trick of putting the forefinger of his left hand into his mouth in cases of perplexity, and of reposing the fingers of his right hand on his pistol while he pondered. He stood for about five minutes in this attitude, looking on the earth without uttering a syllable.

"Is your soul in Candia, Achmet," said Mourad, "and your meditations on the customs, that you stand in silence, when I ask you what is to be done with the infidel?"

"Ah, true!" replied Achmet, "I was thinking of other matters; but tell me, my good friend, have you seen the treasure? is it in gold or silver, and how much is there of either?"

"You shall see it with your own eyes," said Mourad; "but one journey will not suffice to carry it to your haznah."

Achmet's gaze was riveted on the face of Mourad, as if he would have perused his heart. "Is it so!" he exclaimed: "then leave the in-

fidel to my care; we shall have a pipe together and coffee too: you understand me?"

"I do," said Mourad; "you are my friend, my father, your words are wisdom; he is an infidel, destruction to all his tribe!"

"For the love of Allah," whispered Achmet, "do not elevate your voice; curse his father in your heart, but do it with discretion. Be prudent, my dear Mourad; by the Prophet I conjure you, by your soul, by your eyes, be prudent, and henceforth fold up your heart in silence."

"Trust to my discretion," rejoined Mourad. "We have reached the spot; this narrow aperture leads to a secret chamber; we must now descend; will you go down first, or shall I conduct you?"

"Softly, Mourad," exclaimed Achmet. "It is not that I am afraid of shrieking gouls, or bloody spectres, that I like not this subterranean tomb;—why should I fear? whom have I harmed?"

"Nobody accused you," said Mourad, "of mortal injury. Min Allah! you are no robber

to startle at a shadow; you are no traitor to tremble at a sound; you are no murderer to shudder at the sight of a charnel. Mash Allah! God is powerful! why should you fear?"

The word murder was a grating sound to the ear of the Candiote; his cheek became of a hue more cadaverous than wonted, his little eye twinkled more brilliantly than usual, some horrible suspicion seemed to flash across his mind, for he involuntarily retreated from the spot, while Mourad pressed him to descend, and all the arguments of the latter were long of no avail. The wily Achmet was deaf to all entreaty; and while he expressed his disinclination to enter the gloomy charnel, for he either deemed it such, or likely to be made one, his hand never quitted his pistol for an instant, and his eye never glanced from that of Mourad. But when he heard the intention of his friend to return to the village, and to acquaint his father with the affair, he became irresolute, his suspicions wavered, he consented to descend to the chamber; but he would only follow Mourad, and as they had to carry out the treasure, he said it would be as well ere they entered to rid

themselves of their cumbrous weapons, and to deposit all their arms at the entrance where they stood.

Mourad, to use a nautical expression, was taken aback at the proposal; but his usual self-possession did not long forsake him. "I confess," he said, "I do not much like entering strange places in the dark unarmed; but perhaps you are in the right, for we shall certainly require our ceintures as well as our turbans to stow away the treasure."

The two wily Moslems commenced stripping themselves of their arms; weapon by weapon depositing at the same instant, watching every motion of each other, and withdrawing their looks from time to time, as if their glances had only accidentally encountered. Mourad then led the way with an air of frankness, and an expression of good-humoured raillery, which raised the spirits of Achmet, and made him smile at his suspicions; they conversed as they descended, jesting at their apprehensions, and making light of their own fears.

Mourad retrimmed the lamp which had nearly burned out during his absence; but he

took care, as he did so, to kick the diamond-hafted dagger of Suleiman out of its glare. "Behold," said he, throwing one of the money bags containing the plunder of the Aga at the feet of Achmet, "behold a small portion of the treasure; undo that string and satisfy your soul." As he stooped to pick up another bag similar to the former, he contrived to seize hold of the dagger. "And moreover," continued he, (as he passed behind Achmet, who still kept tugging at the cord,) "I will show you in this corner when you have done there,—I was saying I would show you in this corner——"

"What, my dear friend, would you show me?" replied Achmet, still gnawing the string which tied the bag, with all the eagerness of cupidity.

"Vengeance, villain!" roared Mourad, plunging his dagger the same moment in the side of the unfortunate man:—"the vengeance of Michelaki's son!" he thundered in the ears of the groaning man, as he thrust his reeking blade into his body a second time. The first blow had probably reached no vital organ, for he kept on his legs, though he reeled, as he

endeavoured to seize on the weapon of the assassin, but his fingers were mangled in the attempt, and the second wound went home to his breast: he tottered only a moment on his feet, then fell headforemost on the marble floor: —life was still in him,—he drew up his legs, moaned, and breathed hard; he was lying on his side, but as he writhed in the agonies of death, the hand which grasped the wounded part tumbled from his side, he moved his head backwards, and then altogether fell upon his back. His mouth was bloody, his eyes half open, and when he endeavoured to articulate, the stream of life was gurgling in his throat, and all that was audible, was the word Imam, Iman, which he still reiterated—mercy, mercy, mercy! till it died away, and a bubbling noise in his breast and throat alone was heard.

All this time the assassin was standing over him with the bloody dagger in his hand, triumphing in his vengeance, and answering the dying call for mercy with these words:— "The mercy, villain, you showed my father, when you murdered him at the command of your friend Suleiman, that mercy you may now

expect;—such pity as you showed my mother, when you ministered to the lust of your master: curses on both your heads! when you put the innocent wife of him you called your bosom friend into the arms of that licentious beast, and subjected her to the abomination of his reeking kisses: the angels of retribution torment you in both your tombs! when you stole her child, robbed her of reason, and polluted her pure name; such pity, inhuman monster, as you then dealt, receive.—My soul laughs at your entreaties, I spit upon your beard!"

Groan after groan was the only reply of the dying man; he still was sensible, and every word that was uttered was another dagger to his heart; at last one deep-drawn sigh was breathed, it followed some pang of mortal agony, for his body was raised from the ground for an instant, supported on his convulsed arms, he then sunk back a stiff and lifeless corpse. The glow of strong excitement was on the cheek of the avenger as he surveyed the ghastly features of the dead man, but the inward satis-

faction which filled his soul with horrible pleasure, was written in no outward smile.

"Praise be to thy name, O blessed Prophet!" he exclaimed; "'twas thy propitious aid which gave strength to my arm, and success to my undertaking. Half the load which weighed upon my heart is taken away; I now can breathe, can think of my murdered parents without reproach; can say to the accusation of my own heart, 'Be still, revenge has slumbered, but it sleeps no longer; vengeance has had one victim, and justice shall not long be cheated of another.'"

He dragged the corpse into a corner of the chamber, to enable him to collect the plunder which he had taken from the khan. In the act of so doing, the turban rolled off the dead man's head, and a bundle of papers tumbled from the skull-cap. These Mourad carefully deposited in his bosom, and then commenced removing the apparel. From the inner girdle, in which it is customary for most persons, travellers especially, to carry the bulk of their ready money, a leathern belt, strapped round

the body, presented itself to view, which he removed, and its weight convinced him that it was well-lined with gold. "The jackalls," said he, "will have less difficulty with the corpse," as he ripped open the belt, and thrust a handful of Mahmoudies and doubloons into his bosom.

CHAPTER XXI.

A man, young lady? lady, such a man,
As all the world—why he's a man of wax.
Romeo and Juliet.

THE day following the murder was one of festivity in the khan. The ladies of the harem had taken advantage of their lord's absence to invite their female friends to an entertainment; and Mourad, who had the management of affairs in the absence of Suleiman, readily enough consented to the feast, and promised to keep the fantasia a secret from his father. When he arrived at the khan, the animated note of preparation had already commenced in the harem. Some of the women were screaming the thrilling ulalu of joy; others were singing love songs and beating their tambours, while the

more industrious were running to and fro, setting the sweetmeats on the trays, sprinkling the divans with rose-water, and burning incense in the different apartments.

The scene which Mourad had just quitted, ill accorded with the merry-making he found going forward. The groans of his victim were still ringing in his ears, and their horrible vibration turned the sound of music and the voice of revelry into hateful discord. While he was yet standing at the door of the harem, the slave of the first set of guests made her appearance at the gate, to warn the men of the approach of the veiled ones, in order to give time to every male in the house to get out of the way of the visitors. Mourad was obliged to relinquish the hope of seeing Zuleika that morning; but before he retired, two or three of the ladies were on the stairs, and as he passed them by, a few very faint shrieks were uttered, befitting the outraged modesty of the giggling damsels. It was only one of the elderly matrons, who bestowed a good round malediction on the head of the young offender. Mourad made a precipitate retreat, and the ladies were received at

the door of the harem with a thousand caresses and salaams, and repeated ulalus, accompanied by the music of the tambour and castanets. All the women of the harem thronged about the guests to remove their amsacs and ferigees, and then led them to the divan, while they were sprinkled with perfumes, treated with sherbet of syrup and pomegranate juice, and finally presented with pipes and coffee. In the mean time the other guests flocked in, and before noon, had the master of the house suddenly made his unexpected appearance in his harem, he might have imagined he had been ushered into paradise, and stood in the midst of the seventy-two beautiful houries who minister to the felicity of each true believing Moslem.

The divan, which extended the whole length of either side of the room, was entirely occupied; and now that the veils were laid aside, and the ceremony of greeting over, it was only to be wondered at how the small district of the village of Bournarbashi could furnish so many buds and blossoms of beauty and gentility, as were there collected into one bouquet of arid

loveliness. The graceful attitude of each fair one, in the act of holding her chibouque, displayed to the greatest advantage the symmetry of an arm, which might have vied with that of the Venus of the giaours, or the Beltha of the Zabians. But amidst the galaxy of light and loveliness which streamed from the cluster of little stars, there was one full moon of beauty, the mild lustre of whose splendour surpassed the gorgeous rays of every other glittering orb. That planet among stars was the fair Zuleika; though the pensive melancholy of her look was contrasted with the mirth and gladness of the joyful features around her, still she was beautiful; though her heart was far away while she conversed with those about her, yet the sweetness of her voice, and the affability of her manner, delighted all, save the young ladies who envied her good fortune (for the rumour of her approaching nuptials had got abroad), and who wondered what was in her pallid features to captivate so rich a man as Achmet. Indeed the subject of her marriage was the prevailing topic of the guests. Poor Zuleika had to listen to their innumerable congratulations, and to

thank them for good wishes, which went like daggers to her heart.

"Ah, Zuleika!" said one, "I always said that stag-eye of yours would one day shoot a glance through a lattice, that would find its way to the soul of an Effendi, who had a haznah in his house, and money in his purse to buy shawls for his harem. Allah has been most kind to you; he has given you a man of wealth for your husband. May his riches increase! and Heaven has been propitious to the man, for it has given him possession of as fair a maid as was ever led by the Kizlar Aga to the footstool of the Sultan. You need not blush, girl, Wallah el Nebi! you are a bride for a Pacha; and if it please God, in a very little time you will be as fat as I am. Do not despair; young women cannot be perfectly beautiful all at once; it is only after they are married, and eat kibabs and caimac for breakfast, that there is any chance of their increasing in loveliness."

Another matron, of a graver deportment, prefaced her felicitations with a long harangue on the duties of the married state; she told her, if

she wished to keep the first place in the affections of her lord, it was necessary to submit to his caprices, however unreasonable they might be, in order to obtain that ascendancy over his soul which every wife ought to have. She said, she had been only married three times herself, and had so managed her master each time, as to reign in the harem, and to make every inmate dependant on her favour for the smiles of their common lord.

" Foolish brides," continued the experienced lady, " imagine they can never give too much of their company to their husbands; I always thought I never could give too little. I let my amiable husband enjoy the society of all his wives, for there is no good in jealousy; and letting my rivals squabble among themselves, I suffered them to harass one another, to embroil the harem, and to disgust their husband. I had the more merit for obtaining my high station, and preserving it, for I had very little honour as a mother; I had only one child, and that one, as ill-luck would have it, was a girl, and she did not live long. Inshallah! you will have a house full of titles to respect; hold up

your head, child; please God! you will be the Sultana of your harem. And when you do arrive at that dignity, remember, however long be the duration of your reign, the earliest part of it is that in which you are to expect the most homage to your charms, and the largest tribute of presents to your toilet. Cachemere shawls, brocaded trowsers, velvet talpacs, silken curdees, bracelets of gold, tiaras of precious stones are lavished on young wives, but never on old ones; therefore, never let a biram escape without extracting a new dress from your lord's generosity, and never suffer the anniversary of your marriage to pass over, without demanding the customary present of a gold chain or two from his justice."

"By the soul of my husband!" cried another lady, "the daughter of Suleiman is a wife for a Vizier; if she was only a little fatter, she would be just what I was, of all days of the year, on that blessed morning when I first raised my veil in my lord's harem. But praise be to Allah! my husband was a man to look on; he had youth and health on his side, and if he had not the wealth of a Candiote, he had wherewithal to make me happy. Who is this

Achmet, whose riches are in every one's mouth? who ever heard of his father? who ever was the better for his generosity? Staffer Allah! if I were Zuleika, I would sooner marry the poorest fellah who digs the soil, than a dog like this Achmet."

"Why do you call the Effendi a dog?" said an old lady, taking up the cudgels for the intended bridegroom; "is he not rich? and has he not a house and a harem fit for the finest lady in the land? what more do you want?"

"Not much," replied the other lady; "I have only nine hundred and ninety-nine objections to the man: the first nine hundred are that he is old, the other ninety-nine are, that he is ugly as Ashab, and decrepid as the dun camel of Aad. Does a girl with a cold take a pleasure in moonshine; does a man with a fever like the heat of the sun; and does the soul of a woman of sweet eighteen, rejoice in the union with a cross old man?"

"Wallah el Nebi!" said the other, "these are no words to speak before an inexperienced girl; people should be cautious how they injure

the morals of young women, who are fools enough to turn up their noses of their own accord, at the bare mention of a match with an old hawadgi, no matter however rich he may be. Poor fools! they never consider that the older he is, the sooner it will please God to release him from his earthly troubles."

The woman who inveighed against age and ugliness, was so pleased with the humanity of the latter observation, that she evinced a marked deference to the succeeding remarks of the lady who talked of morality with such ardour.

"The duties, my dear child," she continued, addressing Zulieka, "of the married state, it is incumbent upon every experienced matron to teach poor creatures like you, who have never been out of their father's harem, and have no knowledge of things in general. There are twelve nuptial precepts, my good girl, which, if you hope to make a happy wife, you must follow implicitly.

"1st. Obey your husband, for he is your lawful master; he paid your price, and made you presents, therefore is he your sultan; his right

arm is your protection, and the edge of his sword, if needs be, your punishment.

"2nd. Love your husband if you possibly can, and if you cannot, do not hate him; for it is your duty to cherish and make much of him.

"3rd. Be mindful ever of the respect you owe him, for he is your lord; salaam him in the morning with a respectful greeting, and when you present his first pipe to him, kiss his hand and bend your knee, and sit not in his presence till he has twice desired you to be seated.

"4th. When you quarrel with the other women, do it behind his back, and if they rival you in his favour, let him not see your jealousy, that he may not hate you, for jealous wives are always hated. And if he smile on the slaves while you are rubbing his feet, still do it gently, and let him not feel that you are weary of pleasing him.

"5th. When you dance before him, move not your limbs too much, like the Almes, whose voluptuous movements you have no occasion to imitate, but dance like a modest wife and not a wanton.

"6th. Remember your face was made for your

husband, therefore let no human being but him behold it; for it is only the Christian women, who have no shame, who show their features, and are inconsistent enough to conceal their necks, and expose their bare visages.

"7th. Neither, like these unfortunate women, be seen in the street with strangers; do you, who are a Moslem woman, and know what is modesty, when you are addressed by an impudent passenger, never lift your veil but to spit on the wretch who mistakes you for the wife of a Frangi.

"8th. If your husband be old, it is needless to plague him; pray to the Apostle to endow you with patience; and though you are entitled to more recreation than other women, do not frequent the bath too much before the good man has made his will.

"9th. If a foolish Effendi throw a sunbul in your path, you must not stoop to pick it up, nor tell your slave to do so,—that would be unworthy of a virtuous wife; but slaves will pick up flowers, and Jews will deliver impertinent messages, and bath-women will convey insolent love-letters of cloves and charcoal, and a woman

of discretion ought never to be accused of receiving any present or communication of the sort.

10th. Make your breast the sole depository of your own secret, and if it be possible, make it that of your husband's also; the more you know of his secrets, the more power you possess; the less he knows of yours, the smaller is the risk of your confidence being abused.

"11th. If your husband beat you, and your lungs be healthy, rend the air with your screams; lift the roof of the house with the loudness of your shrieks, and cry murder, and rapine, from the street windows; and if all fail to collect the rabble and shame your lord, shout the zangenvar, till the guard and firemen fill the house, and refuse to go till they are paid for their trouble.

"12th. If he threaten to drown you, make a friend of the Cadi's wife, and if she cannot assist you, nobody else can: if he threaten the sack twice, it is time to think of a divorce—a separate maintenance is a great calamity, the allowance is always small, but some women think it pleasanter to be divorced than drowned;

it is a matter of taste, my child, in which it is difficult to advise."

"Praise be to Allah!" cried all the women, "these are words of more value than strung pearls!" each recommended Zuleika to treasure the precious counsel in her heart, and by doing so, and paying proper attention to her diet, in order to arrive at the standard size of beauty, there was no doubt but she would become a great sultana, a mistress over innumerable slaves, and pre-eminent amongst many wives, and still more women who were not.

Zuleika behaved as any other poor girl would have done in any part of the world, whose inexperience was admonished by every matron of her acquaintance a day or two before her wedding; she listened in silence, she wished her counsellors at the bottom of the sea, and when she blushed, modesty had only half the merit of the bright effusion. In the mean time, the ladies, who were tired of smoking and drinking coffee, regaled themselves with sweetmeats and sherbet; and when these were swallowed, lumps of sugar were crunched, till a hakkim, had such been present, might have dreamed there were no

such maladies in Turkey as tooth-ache and indigestion.

But when more pastry and honey were eaten than any but Pagan stomachs could have received with impunity, dinner was laid on the carpet, and the fair *gourmands* sat down to the capacious tray, where no time was lost in tucking up sleeves, from which our *manches à la Mameluke* were certainly not borrowed. If this volume were not written by a serious author, the dignity of whose descriptions admit not of detailing "modes," whatever he may have to do with customs, he would leave his beautiful gastronomes in the harem, discussing the merits of a pilau of rice and kibabs, and a delectable dish of curds and garlic, to devote a chapter to the exclusive subject of a *manche à la Mameluke*, and if possible to rescue the character of the Turkish toilet from the odium which a Madame Girardot and a Mrs. Gill have cast upon it. But it becomes not so grave a personage as "The Mussulman" to meddle with a lady's sleeve; but he may be permitted to say, that had it pleased Allah to have given these Christian milliners a sight of a real

Mameluke sleeve, they would not have copied the fashion so abominably as they have done.

When half a hundred dishes were laid down and removed in rapid succession, the ladies began to wipe their fingers, and to praise the Apostle for making a good dinner. There were no ridiculous assertions on the part of the hostess, that her guests had not eaten; they looked as if they had done ample justice to the comestibles; their hands were placed where Liston's usually are when he is describing the pangs of the tender passion; and some were reclining on the divan, with their slaves standing over them, fanning the sultry air from their faces, and sprinkling their delicate lips with rose-water. Little Venetian glasses, beautifully gilt, were handed round with rosoglio; but some of the matrons more advanced in years complained of faintness, and the hostess, who kept no smelling-bottle in the harem, retired to fetch a restorative, and returned with a phial of inordinate dimension—it was the rakee bottle: the good woman had never heard of Brown or Brunot, but she held that a stimulant was the same in its effect, whether ap-

plied to the gastric or olfactory organs. Pains in the stomach will trouble people in all countries, and cordials will remove them; and poor women, who have a mortal hatred to spirituous liquors, will take a stomachic tincture in any reasonable quantity to relieve them. The windows were thrown open; the fountain was set playing; they who were heated felt refreshed, and they who were faint recovered from their languor. The silence of rumination ceased, and every one in a little time was as animated as ever; the old lady who gave "the twelve good rules" to Zuleika, took the lead in the conversation, every one bowed to her experience, and when she vaunted of being three times married, of having buried one, divorced a second, and abandoned a third; of having preserved her jointure through every vicissitude of matrimonial life, the auditors Mash Allah'd her ability; Yussuf's mother, in particular, applauded her cleverness, and entreated of her to favour the company with the history of her eventful life, a request which the old lady very readily consented to comply with.

CHAPTER XXII.

None wed the second, but who killed the first.
HAMLET.

"I WAS the daughter," said the old lady, "of one of the richest bakers in Stamboul, whose head was unfortunately taken off his shoulders for sending by mistake a light loaf to the house of the Janissary Aga, which had been intended for one of the poor customers. My mother, to whom God be merciful! was the wisest of women; she was prepared for the event, for the ears of my revered father had been nailed to his own door five times, and there was no lobe left for another operation. Therefore, my worthy mother no sooner beheld him in the gripe of the Janissaries on the last occasion, than she fled to the haznab,

carried away all the wealth she found there, and buried it in the court-yard behind the house. The soldiers returned in the evening with the remains of my poor father, they offered them to my mother for four purses, but she suspected it was only a device to ascertain her circumstances, and as the trunk of her poor husband was of no value, she thought she might as well shift the expense of his burial on his enemies; she pleaded poverty, and declared her inability to give the last rites to the remains of her dear husband. The following day the house was ransacked from top to bottom, but no treasure was found, and the corpse of my excellent sire, after remaining three days at the door, with the head under the arm, was thrown into the Bosphorus.

"After the customary time of mourning, we began to forget our loss; we visited the bath, and there, as fate would have it, I made the acquaintance of the wife of the very Janissary Aga who had taken off my father's head. She was a beautiful young Georgian,

about my own age; and had it not been that her eyes were not quite so brilliant as mine, we might have been taken for two sisters. We clubbed our sweetmeats at the bath, and dined together; we became so intimate that I soon discovered my young friend hated her lord, with all the ardour of a moon-shaped maiden married to the man she did not love.

"The fair Fatimah and I parted on the best of terms. It was her husband who had deprived me of my father, therefore why should I be incensed against her? Neither was I. She visited me next day, and assured me of the interest she took in my welfare, by proposing to bring about a match between her husband and myself. I shuddered, of course, at the proposal; but when she informed me that the fame of my beauty had already reached his ears, and that her description of my person had set his heart into a flame, I began to think that my poor father was not the honestest baker in Stamboul, and that the Aga had some plea of justice to offer for cutting off his head. It was not every baker's wife who had a Janissary Aga thrown

in her path; it therefore behoved me to pause before I refused to pick up the pearl which thousands were ready to snatch at.

"Fatimah pressed me to consent to receive her lord's advances. 'He is the best of men,' said she; 'and if I could only love him, I should be the happiest woman in the world. As it is, I have no reason to complain; I am as yet his only wife, and command the harem; but I fear my reign is not destined to be of long duration. The Aga, I know, is on the look-out for another wife, and my only dread is that he may get one I should not like. This, I confess to you, is my principal reason for inducing you to take the empty place in the Aga's heart. I am sure you and I should agree amazingly well; and, allied in friendship, we should be able to do whatever we pleased in the harem.'

"I spoke to my mother on the subject, but she shook her head. She said the baker's gold was all the Aga wanted; and, moreover, that my father's blood being on his head, I could not marry him. For three whole days my mother's respect for the memory of her excellent husband rendered her deaf to all entreaties. The more

I begged of her to return a favourable answer to the Aga's advances, the more inexorable she appeared to be; but at length she relented, and promised to consent, provided the money she meant to leave me was settled on myself. The Aga was no longer master of his soul; at first he only loved me for my money, at last he loved me altogether for myself. He acquiesced in my mother's proposal after much discussion on the subject, and I became the wife of the Janissary Aga.

"I pass over the transports of the first two months; the Aga was a pattern of kindness to all good husbands, Fatimah was the most indifferent of wives, and I, for upwards of eight weeks, was the happiest woman in the world. I verily believe the Aga loved me for that time, and might have done so for God knows how much longer, had not an impudent slave robbed me of the light of my lord's countenance, and deprived me of his favour. I was then inexperienced in the affairs of the harem; I taxed my husband with neglect, my mother talked of the Cadi, of my marriage contract, of the guim a guin, and the imperative nature of domestic felicity on

that day. The Aga turned my mother out of the house; I was revenged on the slave, I beat her daily; there was no tranquillity in the harem. My mother found means of instructing me in every annoyance it was possible to practise on the Aga's peace. I broke his pipes; I let the lamps fall on his garments; spilled water over his pistols; sowed discord in the harem, and imbroiled the inmates. I led the Janissary Aga the life of a dog.

"The awe-inspiring functionary, at whose appearance the people trembled, in whose presence the fiercest soldier dare not call his soul his own, at whose nod the head tumbled from the shoulders of the victim, at the sound of whose voice the Sultan himself felt the insecurity of existence, entered his own harem with fear and trembling, and for his recreation was regaled with the perpetual squabbles of its inmates.

"The poor Aga was naturally fond of domestic tranquillity; he tried to establish peace; he offered the terms, and I accepted them on the condition of my mother being recalled to the harem, where she had resided since my marriage

till the unfortunate difference which drove her from it. The Aga hated my mother as he did the Shitan, but for my sake he consented to her return; and she was not three days within its walls before she turned the harem upside down, and spread confusion over the whole household. At this period the poor Aga was confined to his bed with a slight cold; my mother insisted on being his doctor, she knew the properties of herbs like any hakkim, and had a green hand for a fresh wound or an old sprain. She tried to persuade my husband that his disorder being cold, he needed a hot remedy; she had therefore prepared a compound for him of brimstone and gunpowder, mixed with honey, which would be sure to drive away the cold air which had settled on his heart.

"After a great deal of difficulty, the Aga was persuaded to take the remedy, but unfortunately, in spite of its efficacy, he grew worse and worse, and the more he took, the less comfortable he felt. But my worthy mother was indefatigable in her attentions; since one spoonful had failed to cure him, she gave him two, and when two proved insufficient—she gave him three; and the

fourth was at his lips when he unfortunately expired. The only consolation of poor Fatimah and myself was, that nothing had been left undone; and our only satisfaction the day after he was buried was, that we had made as good a mourning over his remains, as the wives of the Pacha of three tails could have made over their lord.

"The Aga being an officer of the state, the Sultan became his heir, and Fatimah and myself were thrust out of doors with ten purses each, being about the twentieth part of the Aga's substance. My mother and myself returned to our own abode; Fatimah sought a refuge in a neighbour's harem, and having gone through the duties of widowhood for an entire week, she married her old lover at the expiration of that period.

"For my part, I resolved never to change my condition again. An opulent widow, when her grief is over, is the most enviable woman alive. The solemnity of her amsack, the dignity of her deportment, and above all, the freedom of her gait, proclaim her condition wherever she goes, and procure her respect.

There is an amiable self-sufficiency in her look which it is impossible to mistake, however young she may be; there is a world of experience in her full black eye; and on the gulistan of her ruby lips, enjoyment in sweet repose reclines, as if so enamoured of its bed of roses, that it scorned the trouble of getting up.

"When my poor husband was a month dead, I repaired to the cemetery with all my slaves, and held the feast of mourning over the remains of my lord for three whole days, and I left not the tomb before I made a vow to the Prophet to continue a widow all my life. I returned home on the morning of the fourth day, and as I passed by a café, a young man who sat at the door touched my elbow as if by accident, and then followed me till I reached my own house. It would be a long story to tell how my slave was bought over to speak well of the Effendi, to convey love-letters and sugar-plums, which at first only excited my rage, then provoked laughter, next produced pity, and lastly elicited love.

"In one month from the day I made the vow of perpetual widowhood, I was the wife of

the young Effendi whom I met at the café on my way home from the tomb of the lamented Aga. No doubt, it must appear a manifest weakness to have broken a resolution so wisely formed; but women ought to know that fate is fate, and if it be decreed that the empty place in their hearts is to be filled up by a new attachment, all the vows in the world will not long keep them widows. But the history of my second marriage is so important a subject, and teems with so much instruction, that to do justice to it, I must endeavour to fortify my stomach with another spoonful or two of that excellent cordial."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Have you eaten of the insane root,
Which takes the reason prisoner? MACBETH.

"MY new husband was a son of the hakkim bashi of Stamboul, the chief physician of the state, and was himself a doctor, so that my mother's skill was unlikely to be put to the proof in any emergency of my lord's illness. That worthy woman had not suffered me to marry before a marriage contract similar to the former had been made out and duly signed before the Cadi, so that my husband had nothing to gain by a divorce.

"The hakkim being a man of science, whose divine inspiration comes from a sacred source, I flattered myself that there was no question of

our happiness. My husband was a man of the most becoming gravity, he was therefore sure to be a man of discretion and sobriety. My former lord was unfortunately addicted to rum-drinking, and much of our discord had arisen from that cause. The hakkim drank nothing but water; I was delighted with his temperance, yet after a little time he began to look and act like a drunken man; I watched him closely, I set spies over him when he went abroad, and strange, he drank neither wine nor spirits, but he chewed opium; he was a confirmed Theriaki. Every day, when he had seen his unfortunate patients, he strolled to the Suleimanieh, and there he sat till evening, smoking intoxicating hashis, and swallowing pills of maddening aphioun, till his brains were steeped in drunkenness; then would he return home, his eyes rolling, his features flushed, his anteree flying open, his turban awry, and commonly his jebée turned inside out. My soul was petrified with horror; one day he would mistake me for a houri of Paradise, clasp me in a transport of madness to his bosom, squeeze me almost to suffocation, ask for my

companions, and fly after my handmaids, who he imagined were the remaining seventy-one celestial maidens allotted to him by the Apostle. Stupified with rage and terror, I would then behold him returning from the chase, and seizing on my hand, he would implore me to conduct him to the hollow pearl which formed my kiash on the borders of the Prophet's pond.

"This delusion offended me not so much as many of his other drunken visions, for his mistake was one which even a sober man might have made, so houri-like was the splendour of my large black eyes.

"Another day would he come home with the idea that he was furnished with wings, and had flown over mosques and minarets on his way home. Then would he glide round the room with a sliding motion, and assure me he was making the tour of the universe, and was impelled by the wind which blew direct from the throne of the Prophet. In the midst of his frenzy he would stop to beg me to fasten on his wings, which had become loosed, and then set on his travels, jumping over stools which he mistook for mountains, and stepping over

chibouques, which he believed to be the pipes which convey the water of the river of Paradise to the sacred pond of El Cawther.

"I was sickened to death with his absurdities.

"Next day, he would return with the impression that he was the great planet of the heavens, the sun himself, and that I was the moon his mistress, and the stars around us the little pledges of our affection. One moment he would bid me flog the children with the tail of a comet, and threaten to throw a planet at my head if I refused. The next, he would accuse me of stealing his substance, the light of his body, and of bestowing my smiles on his paramour the earth; then would he rail at me for lifting the corner of my veil of clouds to peep at my lover, and swear he would give me an eclipse for my amsack to hide my beauty. Then would he fall to abusing my inconstant nature, taxing me with my changeable disposition, and the coldness with which I returned his ardent passion.

"'Pale-faced wench!' would he exclaim, 'I am weary of you; your days are spent in moping about the heavens, your nights in weep-

ing; the waters of your eyes have already drowned a world; there is no joy in your countenance, no constancy in your soul, no warmth in your bosom. The disk on my face is not the shadow of my nose, if I do not divorce you from bed and board. Remember the blessed Prophet of Islam has already slit your cheek with the edge of his sword! Beware of the other side, I may send for the Apostle to give you another gash. Get out of my sight, planet without shame! hide your horns in the clouds; take your broad impudent face from before me; to bed, I say! and when you rise again, wipe the spots from your countenance which disfigure your beauty, and teach your children some other occupation besides winking at the lewd world.'

"I knew not what to say or do, my vexation deprived me of the power of utterance.

"The following evening he reeled into the harem with a new vagary in his head: he was the Sultan of the universe, I was his Sultana. He assembled the household; my seven slaves were the seven hundred women of his seraglio; the cook was his Grand Vizier, a greasy scullion

his Reis Effendi, my poor mother his Mufti, the water-carrier his Capitan Pacha, and a decrepit negro his Kislar Aga. He ordered my only child to be drowned because it was a girl—it was the law of the land, and could not be avoided: he talked of the Sultan's attributes; he was the imperial man-slayer, and was entitled to slay forty men a day without rendering any account to the judges. He commenced the exercise of his high prerogative by pointing to my mother, and then nodding to the negro. But Sultan as he called himself, the hakkim was seen in his decrees, for when he deposed the vizier, and sentenced the rest of the ministers to death, he committed the execution of the warrant to the cook, and handed him the key of the apartment where he kept his drugs. As for me, the fate of the Mufti was destined to be mine. I was found guilty of having been looked at by a man who passed under the lattice, and I was sentenced to be pounded in the same mortar with my mother, and an order given to fill the bottle of mummy powder in the pharmacy when we were sufficiently pulverized.

"I endeavoured to conceal my indignation as long as I could; but when I could no longer control my rage, I took the slipper off my foot, and flung it at the head of the drunken doctor.

"I had hoped that the indignity he had suffered in the face of his menials, would have had some effect in checking his dissolute habits; but the next day he was as bad as ever. I found him in the harem absorbed in a reverie more monstrous than any former one. He was sitting on the divan with an umbrella extended over his head, which he believed to be the shadow of the blessed Tuba which grows in Paradise, and presents all sorts of delicious fruits to the hands of the true believer. He imagined himself surrounded by every species of delectable food which the sacred volume promises the gratification of to the palate of the faithful. The moment my poor mother entered the room, he seized on her portly person, and would have it she was the ox Balaam, whose flesh was formed for the universal stomach of the family of Islam. The terror of my amiable parent may be easily conceived; I ran to her assistance, but no sooner did I get

within reach of the madman, than he grasped my wrist, and turning up his eyes, he gave thanks to the Apostle for providing his repast with the great fish Nun, the lobe of whose liver is the most delectable of celestial viands.

"When I wept with rage, he swore that my salt tears were the sweet waters of Rocknabad, and called to the servants to catch the drops in silver goblets. In the mean time the opium appeared to be working more strongly on his brain, his staring eye-balls glared on my mother and myself with the expression of a cannibal, he clenched his fingers and moved his jaw, as if he were already masticating us both. I was frightened out of my wits; I made a sudden effort to extricate myself from his grasp, and fortunately succeeded in getting to the door. The liver of the fish Nun was lost to his repast, but the flesh of the ox Balaam was still quivering in his hold, and Oh mighty Allah! what a thrill of horror went through my soul, when I beheld the Theriaki gnawing at the great arm of my screaming mother. I once more had recourse to my papoush, I summoned up my courage and flew at the cannibal,

and partially restored him to his senses by repeated blows of the slipper; he relinquished his hold of his victim, and with her I was glad to make a precipitate retreat from the apartment. But we had not long been absent, when it occurred to me he would be at some farther mischief, so long as he was under the influence of the cursed opium. I returned to the chamber, peeped in at the door, and found the room empty. To my horror I observed the box in which my trinkets had been deposited broken open, and on examining it every gem was gone. I heard the sound of the madman's voice in the kitchen, I rushed to the door, and there I beheld my beautiful trinkets scattered before the eater of opium, with a saucepan in one hand, and a pearl necklace in the other. I became reckless of existence, fear departed, and fury took possession of my heart.

"'Son of a drunken Theriaki!' I exclaimed, 'What, in the name of the Prophet, are you about?'

"With all the composure in the world, the maniac informed me that he was preparing a pilau of boiled pearls, which he meant to gar-

nish with stewed rubies. The water in which he meant to boil the pilau, he gravely told me, was composed of melted crystals.

"My heart died away at the words of the madman; I snatched the pearls from his hand, I tore the saucepan from his grasp, and rescued my jewels from the fatal process which awaited them.

"The following morning I accompanied my mother to the Cadi, and the moment I entered the hall of justice, I took my slipper, and turning the sole upward, I called for justice, and demanded to be divorced from a bad husband.

"'Effendi!' I exclaimed, 'it has been my misfortune to have married an opium-eater, whose daily intoxication is the terror of my soul. One day he fancies himself a Sultan, and calls his slaves the ministers of state; the next day he pursues my handmaids, whom he supposes the houries of Paradise; another day he mistakes my mother for the Ox Balaam, and your poor servant, Effendi, for the great fish Nun, and attempts to eat us both; and when he is disappointed of his repast, he seizes on my jewels to make a pilau of strung pearls, and a

garniture for the dish of stewed rubies. But that is not the worst, Effendi; his imagination is so taken up with houries, that he has forgotten he has a wife; and I, Effendi, have no reason to remember I have a husband, though I have cause to recollect that I am tied to a Theriaki, who has the name of one.'

"I produced my marriage contract, and the Cadi immediately sent a chiaous for the hakkim, who was forthwith taken from his bed and brought before the judge.

"The appearance of the man as he tottered into the room, manifested the truth of my complaint. The effects of the previous evening's intoxication were visible on his haggard features; his limbs trembled, his eyes were dim and sunken, his skin was shrivelled, and his whole countenance ghastly.

"The Cadi asked him what he had to say to my complaint, but his voice was so tremulous when he attempted to reply, that it was impossible to distinguish the words he uttered. The Cadi stared at him for a few seconds, shook his head, and told him he was a drunken Theriaki, and would come to an untimely end.

merchants, I one day made a purchase of a piece of linen of a young Egyptian, whose courteous manner and sprightly conversation pleased me no less than his sparkling eyes and handsome features, notwithstanding the swarthiness of his complexion. I frequented his stall, bought goods I did not want, and had them carried home by the merchant himself, and in due time I set his heart in a blaze, and my own also.

"Foolish people think that the first flame of love is the most ardent; I found it otherwise. Each time I married, the present passion was stronger than the former; it appeared to me as if my heart had become enlarged by each previous engagement, and was made capable of holding a greater quantity of love.

"But there was one difficulty in the way of my marriage with the merchant. He had his legal number of wives in his own country; he had already made four women happy, so that I was destined to remain miserable, unless I consented to enter into that species of wedlock which is called hakabin, and which is adopted only by strangers who mean to sojourn but a

limited period in the place they visit. It is not, I must allow, the most respectable mode of invoking the genius of Aniran, but what could I do?—I was in love with the Egyptian, my heart had become like a red-hot coal, and as violent passions have sudden ends, I thought I might as well try a twelvemonth's marriage.

"I accompanied my suitor to the house of the Cadi, where he entered into a compact, signed and sealed, in the presence of the magistrate, to maintain me as his true and lawful wife for one year.

"I never entered into the married state with so much alacrity; the very idea that I was not going to be tied for life to a man who might turn out to be a Theriaki at the end of three weeks, like my last lord, or at the expiration of two months pat the cheeks of my handmaids, like my first worthy husband, was a source of endless gratification to me; and I felt as if nothing was wanting to render men completely happy, but the general adoption of annual marriages.

"What a blessed thing is it, thought I, that two poor people of opposite tastes are at liberty

to part before their individual caprice has time to become a mutual curse. How delightful it is to see an honest couple, who were fools enough to think that their souls were united when their hands were joined, discover their error timely enough to redeem their happiness, instead of sitting all their lives mowing and chattering at one another, like two monkeys attached by the middle.

"How happy a thing it would be, if it would but please Allah to reprieve poor mortals from the sentence of discord for life, and suffer their souls to walk at large after a twelvemonth's imprisonment. I loved my husband ten times more than I could have done had I been united to him for ever; I talked of nothing but the blessings of the hakabin, and for three whole months it was impossible to be a happier woman than I was.

"I already began to think of renewing the contract at the expiration of the year; there were only three quarters of it to come, and it would be impossible, I thought, to feel otherwise then than I did now. But towards the beginning of the fourth month, I discovered

a few trifling imperfections in my lord, which had previously escaped my observations. Before the close of it, I found as many flagrant faults as I had hitherto found virtues; and in the course of the fifth I had reason to believe, that had I been married, for life, I could not have hated my husband more heartily than I did my twelvemonth spouse.

"The soul of the merchant was altogether wrapt up in his Egyptian commodities. A piece of the linen of El Masr was more precious in his sight than any earthly object. Morning, noon, and night, I heard of nothing but linen. He spoke, thought, talked, and dreamt of nothing else. At breakfast, dinner, and supper, his eternal theme was linen; and even when he was repeating his five prayers, instead of turning his face to the keblr of Mecca, he used to plant himself opposite a pile of his favourite commodity, at the end of the room.

"It was in vain I tried to get him off the inexhaustible topic. If I spoke of flowers, he talked of flax-seed; if I asked what grew in El Masr, I was answered, hemp. If I en-

quired about the dress of the Arab women, the reply was linen.

" All day long the word was ringing in my ears, and in spite of all my endeavours to banish it from my mind, I still found linen! linen! linen! jingling perpetually in my head like the fag end of a hacknied song.

" If I succeeded at all in turning the conversation, it was only to make apparent another of the amiable propensities of my lord. He had a thorough contempt for every thing that came not from El Masr; and no matter what was spoken of, it was sure to be made an object of comparison with something similar in his land of linen. El Masr was the standard by which the value of all sublunary things was determined previous to their being decried. If I talked of the beauty of Stamboul, it was nothing to that of El Masr: if I spoke of the sun, moon, or stars, those of El Masr were sure to get the preference. In short, there was no uttering a syllable on any earthly subject, without having the detestable name of El Masr dragged in some way or other.

" The annoyance became so intolerable at

last, that I would have willingly exchanged the society of the worrying son of El Masr for that of the mad-brained Theriaki; for the contempt I felt for the former was infinitely more irksome than the terror the latter inspired. I cursed all hakabin weddings in my heart. 'Had I taken the man,' said I, 'for good and all; for the sake of his peace he would have endeavoured to render himself agreeable. If two strange people get into a boat to cross the Bosphorus, they are sure to quarrel about the balance: put them into a ship to make a voyage to Scanderia, and they are likely to agree; the annoyance they cannot escape from, they try to put up with as well as they can.

"The eighth month of the hakabin had not expired before a fracas occurred in the harem, in which my poor mother, as usual, took a leading part. I don't know how it was, but every man I married hated my mother; each of them objected to her, or any relative of mine, being an inmate of the harem. I must confess they had reason on their side; the relatives of wives ruin the peace of every house they fix their abode in. It is their business, out of the

purest motive of friendship, to seek for imperfections in the husband, which the wife is too blind to see, and then to acquaint her with them. One who is eating the bread of the man she tries to lower in the affections of his wife, says, 'Ah, my dear cousin! are you and your husband happy? Pray Allah you are so! but doubtless there are some little misunderstandings between you now and then, as there always are in married life.

"'How is his temper, dear? does he treat you well? does not scold at all, never bawls at you? You know, love, I am your cousin, and only ask you these questions because I am interested in your happiness. Ah! these husbands, dear, are great brutes when they are allowed to get their own way; they impose upon poor women's patience and humility; does he on yours, dear? You are sure he never frowns when you are alone with him, and looks cross and surly, and bids you go to the Shitan, when you ask leave to go to the bath? Well, I am sure I am glad to hear he is not like other men: Heaven grant you may always find him good-tempered and kind to you! but I have

my fears; he is a very fierce-looking man, dear.'

"Another says, 'Well, my poor niece, how do you get on? do you still think your husband loves you? You believe he does: how wonderful is Allah! I trust he always will love you, child; but he is a very young man: there are too many pretty slaves about the harem, and he talks to them, child, when they fetch his pipe or remove his beneesh—I don't like that. Have you observed any thing, child? Is it possible you have remarked no change in his affection, no coolness in his manner, no hastiness in his reply to your expressions of endearment? Masters, my child, will wink at their wives' handmaids; they will toy with their fingers and play with their curls, and whisper with the giggling jades in the passages. Ah, child, you do not know these husbands as I do; if you did, you would have an eye on yours.

"'I fear he is a bad one; that eye of his, my dear girl, is too watery for the abode of constancy; his hand is too moist for an honest husband's; it is greatly to be feared he will make you miserable. I trust in the Apostle he

shows no preference to his other wife; that you have no cause to be jealous. Min Allah! Heaven forbid he should so far wrong my poor child as to rob her of that which the law entitles her to, the full half of his affections! There are only two of you, and the equal division of his love is a duty he owes each of you. If he defraud you, as I fear he does, of that portion of his society which is your due, you are an injured wife, and must resent the injustice done you.'

"Then comes an old lady with a discontented face, who says:—'Alas, my daughter! you are married to a man who is not able to keep you as other women of your rank are kept: your husband is a poor scurvy fellow, he has never given you a ride in a gilt coach but once since your marriage. Our neighbours' wives eat roast lamb and marsh-mallows for a salad every day; we are fed like porters' wives on beans and buffalo, and if we do have a pilau, it is never garnished with a boiled fowl and saffron sauce. Why did I marry you to a wretch without a haznah? better I had given you to the last scullion in the house of 'God's poor servant' the Mufti. What honour can he ex-

pect in his harem who cannot afford a Beiram present to his wife's mother? What love is a husband entitled to, who cannot dress his wife as well as his neighbours are attired? What right has he to lift his voice in the harem who is not able to buy a single cachemere shawl when the poor woman, who is tied to his poverty, is pining for a new one? Staffer Allah! what does a woman marry for? Is it not to live like a lady upon dainty food; to visit the bath, like an Effendi's wife, in suitable garments of silk and satin; to ride in a coach drawn by beautiful oxen; to sit in the poop of a carved caique, and every boat that passes to hear the delightful sounds of—'Whose Sultana can that be? Who ever beheld so elegant a ferigee? Who but the Reis Effendi can be the owner of so much splendour? Who else could afford his wife such a magnificent murlin? What fashionable trowsers! how large and elegant! It is only in the harem of the Defterdar, the treasurer of state, that such a pair is to be found;'—and a thousand other expressions of charming envy and gratifying admiration. But you, my dear daughter, have no such

pleasures; you are thrown away on a man who has no soul, an Effendi of no substance. It is very true, he says he loves you, but what signifies his love without adequate proofs of his affection? one present, my child, is worth a thousand protestations. You do not seem to feel how truly unfortunate you are, but it is my duty to open your eyes to your unhappy condition.

"'Do you not lead the life of a Santon's mistress? You who were so tenderly brought up, so delicately reared, fed with a spoon of the finest ebony, served out of dishes of the rarest China, and seated on carpets of the finest tissue—Oh! what a change has taken place! A common wooden spoon is the best in the harem; the pottery of Kenah is the choicest in the house, and a coarse rug of Caramania is the softest seat for my poor daughter. Ah, child! I fear you forget what is due to your dignity; it is incumbent on you to show this poor husband of yours that you are aware of his poverty, and that you despise him for it. It is absurd to talk to me of your happiness; you cannot, nor ought you to be happy. You

are not maintained as a woman of fashion ought to be maintained, and you are therefore devoid of your mother's spirit if you do not worry the wretch by unceasing demands for clothes and trinkets, befitting a lady of your rank, till you drive him mad, and then perhaps riches may pour on the head of the favourite of heaven.'

"Then comes a little mawkish sister, whose head is filled with nothing but Megnouns and Khosrues, and who dreams of nothing but beautiful Effendis and love-sick striplings.

"'Ah, sister!' she exclaims, 'what a fine thing it is to be married to a handsome man who wears embroidered clothes, and rides high-couraged horses; on whose shining sword the sunbeams glitter, and whose costly pistols are resplendent with gold and silver! Heigho! I wonder, shall I ever get such a husband? Allah is merciful! if it please him, some young Effendi may fall in love with me; some charming youth, with his turban on one side, and a hyacinth dangling over his forehead.

"'Was your husband ever handsome, my dear sister? did he ever look better than he

does now? was he always so meagre in his person? were his features always so melancholy? Poor dear man! he is so kind, so good-natured, that it is quite a pity he is so much disfigured by the small-pox. But the ugliest men are sometimes very good-tempered; he can no more help being ill-favoured, than the deformed camel of Aad. Did you ever see him smile, sister? how does he look, pray, when he is happy? I often thought of asking you if it was possible to love an ugly man; I am sure I could not: had I such a husband as yours, I would be sure to hate him. I think I could even tear his eyes out.'

"Such is the language which the relatives hold who are suffered to live in the harems of their newly-married friends; and very possibly it was on account of hearing my amiable mother lecture me in a similar strain, that my Egyptian lord gave her twelve hours' notice to quit his house, and forbade her ever darkening the threshold of his door again. The following morning I was to be deprived of the society of my revered mother; she employed the interval, in throwing the entire household

into disorder, and when the merchant ventured to remonstrate, he drew a shower of invective on his head, such as no other woman in the world but my mother was capable of pouring forth. The merchant listened patiently to the abuse which no human power was capable of controlling; but when she uttered an imprecation on El Masr, and all its linen, he could no longer restrain his fury; he flung every cushion of the divan at the person of my amiable parent, one only took effect, which sent her to the farthest corner of the room, and caused her head to come in contact with the wall with such violence, that I thought the shock would have been fatal to her; she appeared, however, to be not even stunned by the blow. I observed her give a glance at the pile of linens which stood by her side; I marked her awful eye glaring round the room as if in quest of some object wherewith to wreak her vengeance. Her gaze at length alighted on the capacious inkstand of the merchant; in the twinkling of an eye it was in her grasp, and before the horrified Egyptian had time to bid her hold her infuriated hand, the jar was dashed to pieces

on the linens, and its contents streamed over the whole surface of the pile.

" Never shall I forget the look of agony of the Egyptian; he stood absolutely petrified with horror, whilst I and my revered mother fled screaming from the house, calling out murder at every step till we reached the street.

" I passed the unexpired period of the hakabin in the seclusion of a second widowhood. I could not help thinking my amiable mother was a little to blame in her late conduct, and, had it pleased Heaven to have mitigated her fury on the last awful occasion, that it would have been better for all parties.

" During my residence in the harem of the Janissary Aga, I made the acquaintance of many women of high rank, and amongst the number, of the wife of the Etchi Bashi, or chief Cook of the Janissaries. Our intimacy had become a friendship, and one day, on passing her door, I thought I might as well make an inquiry after her health, so I proceeded to the harem and sought its mistress, but the first slave I saw, informed me that my poor friend had been six months in her grave.

" I could not do less than set up a lamentation for the poor woman, and whilst I was performing this act of civility, the noise of my grief brought the Etchi Bashi himself to the door. I instantly covered up my face, but before I had time to pull down my veil, which I had removed for the purpose of making the lamentation, the Etchi Bashi had a full view of my features.

" Notwithstanding the excessive rudeness of a master of a house making his appearance at the door of his harem when a female visitor was announced, I was in no hurry to escape without hearing a few words concerning the death of my poor friend. The widower invited me to enter; there were no strangers, he said, in the house, and he would be able to tell me every thing I desired to know about his lamented wife, without any fear of interruption. It would have been highly improper for any inexperienced young woman to have accepted his invitation, but a thrice-married woman may go anywhere with impunity.

" I pass over the melancholy details I was obliged to listen to during the early part of my

visit, and the more interesting ones which followed them. One visit paved the way to another; one gentle topic led to a second; from the language of lamentation we proceeded to that of love; in a fortnight I was the wife of the chief Cook of the Janissaries.

"My mother was delighted with the marriage; I myself overjoyed at my good fortune. I was the mistress of the harem of one of the greatest functionaries in the empire, and had no rival within its walls to share the smiles of my husband. My mother, as usual, insisted on becoming an inmate of the house, of which her daughter was the Sultana, and the illustrious cook consented to any arrangement which I approved of.

"Whether it was owing to my great experience, or to the little care my new husband took to conceal the leading passion of his soul, I know not; but in the course of a little week, I was as well acquainted with every weakness of the heart of the chief Cook, as if he had a glass-window in his bosom. Though the public exercise of his profession occupied little of his time, its private duties engrossed all the

faculties of his soul. The great business of his life was eating, and the first of all human pleasures he believed to consist in cooking; he spent half his time in the kitchen, and boasted of having a dinner for every day in the year, each day's repast different from that of the former, and every dish an invention of his own. The first day we sat down to dinner, I thought my poor mother would have died ere the repast was over.

"The moment the dishes were set down, the nauseous effluvia that arose from the viands was quite overpowering; drugs which were never used except by hakkims, were here employed as condiments. Turmeric and carraways, cumin-seed, and assafœtida, had been employed in the composition of the sauces with no unsparing hand, and the odour that was emitted from these horrible compounds was more than could be endured by any stomach save that of the chief Cook. My poor mother tasted one dish after another, every morsel was accompanied by a wry face, and when at last she put her fingers into a dish of bananas stewed in boiling oil, and drew them forth

screaming with agony, and exclaiming that she was burned to death, I trembled for the consequence; I expected to hear her every moment utter an imprecation, not only on the dinner, but on the cook, and I was not disappointed. I thanked the Prophet that my husband was not present, and I endeavoured by every means in my power to soothe her, and to assure her that a dish of scalding oil should never again be set before her. Next day we entreated permission to cook our own dinner, but the reply I received was such as little disposed me to ask a similar favour. In a short time after this, the Etchi Bashi condescended to dine with us; it was with difficulty I could get my poor mother to sit down, and before she did so, I entreated her, for the sake of the Prophet's beard, to avoid giving offence to my husband. She promised to be discreet, but every time I saw her put fingers to her lips, I trembled for the result. Nothing could exceed the politeness of the chief Cook; with his own fingers he helped me to the choicest bits, but I found it impossible to swallow them, the odour of the assafœtida was in my nostrils, and my heart was

in my throat. I thought I should have dropped every moment; once only I dared to give a glance at my suffering mother. I beheld the Cook pressing her to eat a roasted badingan, stuffed with forced-meat, turmeric, and anise-seeds; the more she declined the proffered dish, the more was she solicited to taste it: at last, I saw it raised to her lips, it disappeared; but the jaw never moved, the throat never stirred, her features became fixed, her eye-balls rolled, the perspiration poured down her forehead, she appeared to be in the agonies of death. But I was relieved from the fear of her dissolution, by the sound of a suffocating shriek issuing from her lips as she made a sudden effort to spring upon her feet. In her endeavour to arise, her dress got entangled in her feet; she tried to extricate her garment, but in doing so, she trod on it in front, and this unlucky accident pulling her forward, she lost her balance. I saw her going two minutes, at least, before she fell, but I had not the presence of mind to give a hand to save her; and as for the chief Cook, he was so bewildered with astonishment, that he was incapable of motion.

"I found it impossible to keep my eyes on the falling figure of my venerable parent; but I could not shut my ears against the tremendous crash which followed—when the Prophet split the moon, the uproar in the planet could not have been greater. I cast my eyes in the direction of the tumult, and the first object my sight encountered, was the body of my amiable mother extended across the dinner-tray, floundering in a confused mass of sauces and sweetmeats, pilaus and kibabs, all jumbled together, and my parent in the midst.

"The dinner-service was utterly demolished; the chief Cook stood aghast, gazing on the ruin of a repast which had occupied his whole morning, and on which his woe-begone features showed how much he had set his heart.

"'If you have a spark of pity,' said I, 'in your bosom, assist me to raise my venerable parent; she is in the agonies of death, and the horrible compounds that are reeking under her nose will hasten her dissolution.

"'Shadow of the sacred stew-pan of our corps!' cried the chief Cook, 'have I lived to see a dinner which might be classed among the

noblest efforts of human ingenuity, destroyed in the twinkling of an eye by an old wretch without taste or breeding? have I married a daughter of the Shitan, who has the insolence to give the name of horrible compounds to the most delicious dishes that were ever cooked? Your goul of a mother may rot where she lies before I give a hand to raise her; let her die where she sprawls, and the sooner you follow your venerable parent, the better pleased shall I be.'

"The unfeeling Cook, with these words, flung out of the room; I immediately ran to the assistance of my mother; I was just in time to save her from suffocation: her face was buried in a dish of pilau, one hand was in a tureen of soup, the other was extended over a plate of kibabs. When I succeeded in getting her on her legs, it was impossible to behold a more deplorable figure; masses of clotted rice were spattered over her features, and one side of her face was dyed completely yellow with the saffron sauce which came in contact with it.

"I led her to her chamber, groaning every step she went, and muttering curses on the head

of the chief Cook and all his tribe. She swore that she was poisoned, and that the steam of the assafœtida was still in her nostrils. For all the treasures of the universe, she said, she would not remain another night under the roof of a wretch who must have inevitably studied the black art, for nowhere else could he have learned the composition of such horrible messes as had been that day set before them.

" I endeavoured to persuade her to remain in the house till the following morning, but all my entreaties were of no avail, she even threatened to bestow a malediction on my head if I stayed behind.

" The Etchi Bashi cut the matter short, by rushing into the room with a long stick of a chiaous in his hand, with which he threatened to break every bone in the body of my poor mother, if she did not immediately leave the house. He had evidently sallied from the kitchen, for in his left hand he held a saucepan, smoking as if it had been just taken off the fire, which probably contained the ingredients for a new dish.

" At the sound of his threat, I saw the blood

rushing into the cheeks of my worthy mother. I observed how her eyes began to glisten, how her fingers began to stir; I whispered in her ear, Patience, Mother; for the sake of the Prophet, keep your temper!—but I was talking to the winds. My mother was deaf as the howling tempest, but she was not dumb; she let loose her tongue on the Chief Cook; for ten minutes her fury ceased not, but its termination was followed by a more aggravating insult than any she had yet offered; she spit in the saucepan which the Etchi-bashi held at arm's length to keep her from his person.

"The scene that followed was the most terrible I ever witnessed, the saucepan and its scalding contents were flung at my poor mother's head. The shrieks that followed were truly awful; the sufferer ran round the room yelling the terrific Yangenvar, while the Cook, regardless of the fire-cry, followed up his brutality by beating my poor mother from the top of the stairs to the bottom, and then thrusting her into the street. I was half dead with terror, and would have given the world to have got out of the house. I expected every moment to see the en-

raged Etchi-bashi, enter with another murderous saucepan to scald me to death; but, luckily, the recollection of the stewpan he had left on the fire called him back to the kitchen, and while he was occupied there, I contrived to slip out of the harem and make my way to the outer door. When I crossed the threshold, I considered myself the most fortunate of women; I immediately returned to my old habitation, where I found my mother in the hands of a barber, who was pouring linseed-oil over her scorched features. She was not so bad, however, but that she was able to lay all her misfortunes to my account, and I, in return, all mine to hers; in short, my amiable mother and myself did nothing for three whole days but quarrel. The fourth we were fatigued:—my mother had lost the skin of her nose—I had lost my husband; we condoled with one another, and became, as affectionately attached as ever.

"In the mean time an unfortunate circumstance arose which drove us from Stamboul. A servant of the late Janissary Aga's called one day at our house, and asked to have a private conversation with my mother. I stationed my-

self at the door of the adjoining room, and, to my utter astonishment, heard the menial demand ten purses of my mother as the price of his silence touching the murder of his deceased master. It was in vain my mother protested that the Aga died a natural death, that the physic she had administered might have been given with impunity to a new-born infant; but it was all to no purpose, the wretch would have it that my mother had murdered the Aga, and he only gave her one week to prepare the money or to abide the disclosure.

"At his departure, my poor mother of course protested her innocence of the foul deed; but such was the terror the bare accusation had caused her, that she made up her mind to leave Stamboul before three days. All my endeavours to dissuade her were ineffectual; she had a sister settled in Bournarbashi, and there she would go to see her, whether I accompanied her or not.

"My amiable mother always kept the money; duty and affection bade me not suffer her to go alone. In three days time we were on the high road to Bournarbashi, where we arrived in

safety, and ultimately fixed our abode; my poor mother, an eternal one; she died in a fit of passion, induced by a charge brought against her of interfering in the domestic concerns of a neighbour's harem.

"I gave my revered parent the finest funeral that was ever seen in Bournarbashi. She has been now ten years in Paradise, and in that space of time I have had five offers of marriage, but I have refused them all. I have been only married to four men, and three of them are living. With all, save one, I might have been happy, had it pleased Allah to have called my amiable mother to his bosom a few years earlier; but I do not repine at my fate. I have lost four husbands' affections, and gained four wives' experience; and the result of all that experience is the conviction that no worse enemies to the peace of a husband can abide in his harem, than the female relatives of his wife."

The old lady terminated her story amidst a thousand Mashallahs; every body praised Allah for her experience.

The guests began getting their veils in order,

the sun was setting, and no ladies' party ever breaks up much later. The ceremony of salaaming was gone through for a good half hour, and at length the last visitor was past the threshold of Suleiman.

CHAPTER XXVI.

I doubt some danger does approach you nearly:
If you would take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here. MACBETH.

MOURAD was now busily employed in arranging his plans. Suleiman had not yet arrived, and ere another day he hoped to be far beyond his reach. The deed he had just committed left him little inclination to pursue his vengeance any farther for the present. The possession of Zuleika and his own safety now engrossed his sole attention. But the day, he endeavoured to persuade himself, would come, when the supernatural warning he had received at Chiblak, should not be thrown away. In the mean time he visited the harem, put Zuleika in possession of all his plans for their escape, obviated every

difficulty which the timorous girl suggested, and sought to dispel her fears. But Suleiman was at the gate while he was yet explaining all his schemes for their escape, and the news of his arrival came like a thunderbolt on both. In the consternation of the moment, Mourad whispered in her ear, "Whatever happen, an hour after midnight be on the terrace: fail not, for your soul."

He rushed from the apartment to meet the Aga, who had just passed the threshold; the warmth of Mourad's greeting, the improvement in his looks, (how often is the flushed cheek wrongly interpreted!) have been already noticed. Every thing required from the hasnah he took care to fetch with his own hand; every time the taxes were alluded to, he referred to the certainty of collecting the remainder in the morning; every time that Achmet was spoken of, he expressed his wonder at his absence. In short, till within an hour of midnight he managed to draw off the attention of the Aga from every subject likely to lead to a discovery of his project; and only took his leave for the night when Suleiman was going to repose.

Mourad retired to his chamber to count over the minutes of the most anxious hour of his existence, the last he was destined to pass in the place which had hitherto been his home. The occurrences of the last four-and-twenty hours were crowded on his mind, but in the feverish confusion of a sickly dream. The plunder of the khan, the terrific tempest of the night, the apparition, and the murder, and now the unexpected appearance of the Aga, and the immediate flight of Zuleika and himself, all these strange circumstances filled his mind with astonishment. The watch was before his eyes; another little hour, and he and his beloved Zuleika were to be happy, and ere the morning dawned the wide world was to be all before them. Such were the visions of Mourad, the air-built castles of youthful hopes, but raised only to crumble into ashes.

A sudden cry from the apartments of the Aga burst on his ear:—Murder! rapine! robbery! were the only sounds he could distinguish; and hardly were they repeated, when Suleiman rushed into the room sword in hand, and seized on the throat of the astonished culprit. The

fury of his rage glowed in his eye-balls, and convulsed his lips; his fingers grasped the neck of Mourad, he trembled from head to foot, his lips moved but he could not articulate a word, the sword was close to Mourad's breast, and every moment he expected to have it plunged into his heart. At length the fingers of the Aga relaxed.

"What, in the name of the blessed Prophet, is the matter!" cried Mourad.

"Villain!" exclaimed Suleiman, recovering his breath, "where are my treasures? produce them in a moment, or die like a dog, ungrateful kafir! Son of an accursed infidel, restore my jewels! Madman, fool, to think to laugh at my beard!"

"Allah defend my soul!" said Mourad, seizing on the interval between the fury and the exhaustion of the Aga,—"am I alive? is this my father? what do I hear? are you dreaming, Sire, or am I in my senses? Kill me if you please; I bow my head before my honoured parent. How have I deserved this shame?—I, whose only fault was too much care. Why did I place the treasures in the secret

recess of the hasnah for greater safety? Go and see them with your eyes. Why did I not leave them in the accustomed spot, fearing as I did some thief taking advantage of your absence? Oh vile world! kill me, I beseech you; heap ashes on my head, blacken my face for ever in the presence of my enemies. This comes of too much care. But let me clear my reputation before I die. Come with me to the chamber that I may put your treasures before your eyes; follow me to the hasnah,—oh woeful day! oh cruel destiny!—let me prove my innocence to the world."

"Stir not, for your soul," cried Suleiman, with a voice of comparative composure. "Are they all there, the gold and the jewels?—swear it by your eyes,—you are sure they are all there, nothing wanting? Stir not from my side; moderate your voice; if it be as you say, I want not these slaves who are crowding at the door to look on you with contempt."

By this time the whole khan was arisen, the very women were mingled with the soldiers, all anxious to know the cause of the alarm.

"Away, slaves!" said Suleiman, going to the

door of the apartment, " look well to the gate, and see that no one leaves the khan."—" Now, Sir, come along," he continued, addressing Mourad, seizing him at the same time by the shoulder. " If I have been dreaming, you shall have reason to rejoice."

" There are many words in falsehood," replied Mourad, " but truth has only one, and I have said it."

They walked out of the room; the women fled before them as they approached the harem. They reached the door of the hasnah. " Enter," said Suleiman, pushing Mourad before him into the treasury, a dark room without any windows and with no door beside the entrance, but one which formerly communicated with the women's apartments and was now closed up. The instant Mourad entered, holding the door as he did so, with the velocity of lightning he turned round, thrust the burning lamp he held into the face of Suleiman, and banged the door on his assailant. He had arranged the whole proceeding in the interval between his exit from his own chamber and his reaching the hasnah. The lamp was extinguished, the Aga prostrate,

and ere he had arisen, a tremendous crash was heard and then a hundred female shrieks. 'Twas the demolition of the door leading to the harem, and the exit of the robber, rushing amidst a host of screaming women, many of whom measured their length as he dashed onwards. He gained the terrace, a single bound brought him on the roof of the adjoining stables, in an instant he was on his feet in the garden, stunned for a moment, but that moment gave him breath. The low wall was no impediment, the night was dark and he was in the open plain, lights gleaming in every window of the khan, women screaming the terrific Yangenvar on the house-top, and a host of soldiers issuing at the gates.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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